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into internal
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martial art for mental
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7 ESSENTIAL STRENGTH SHORTCUTS

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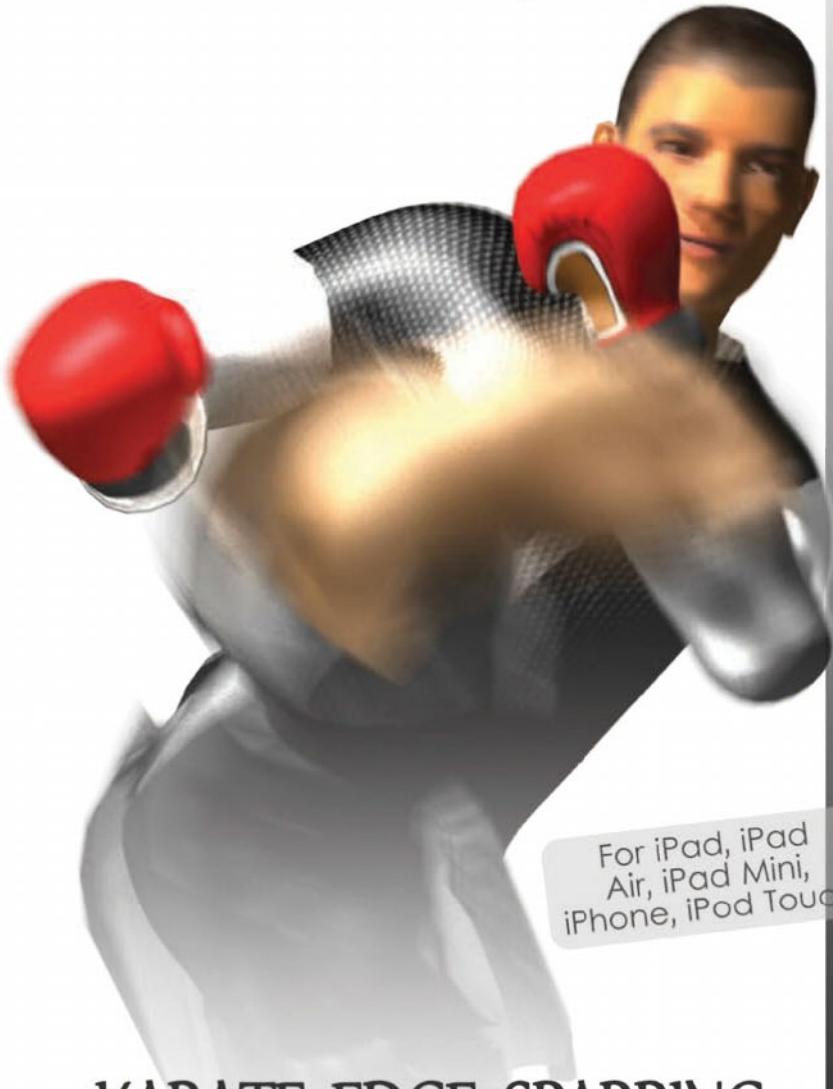
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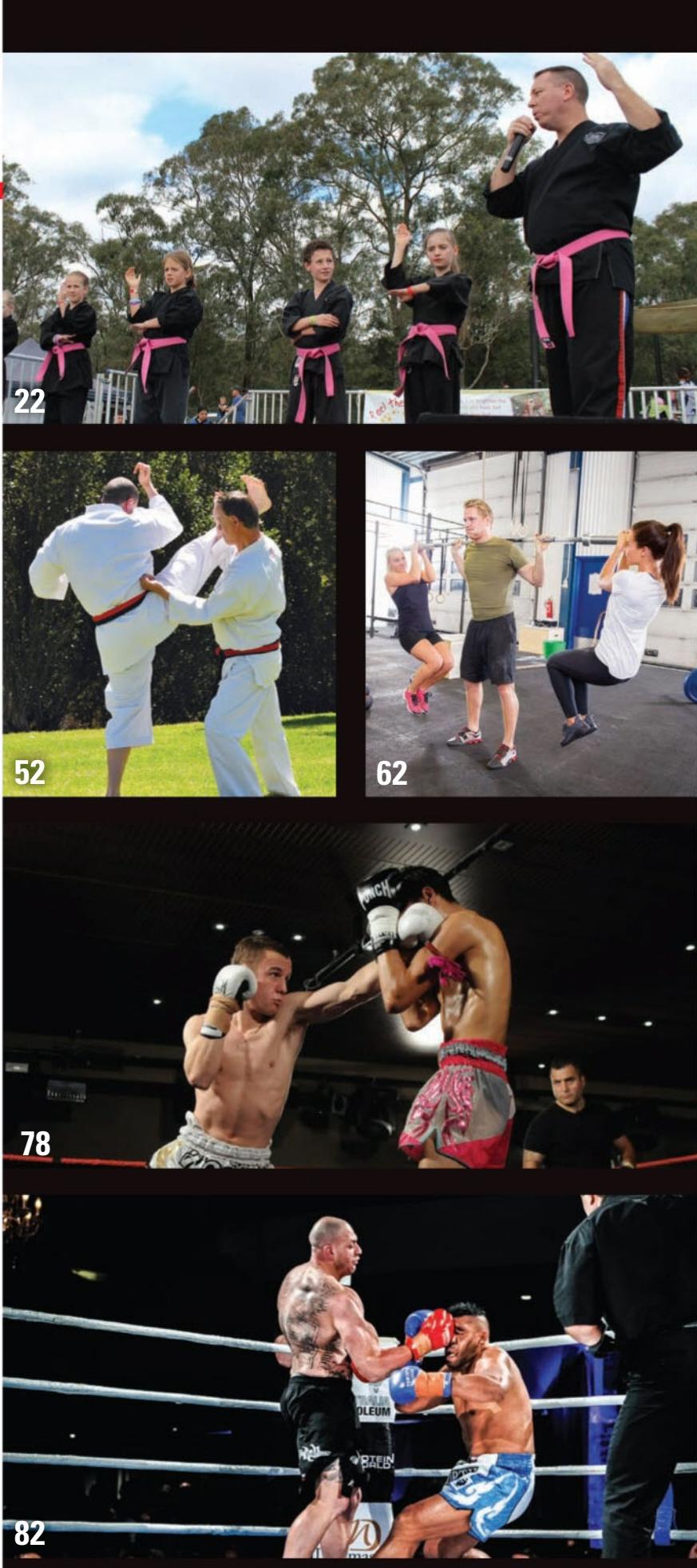
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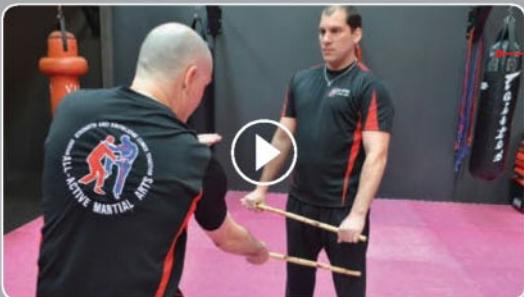
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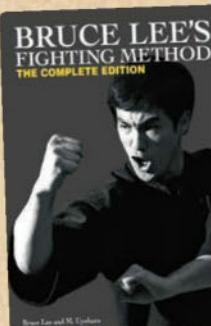
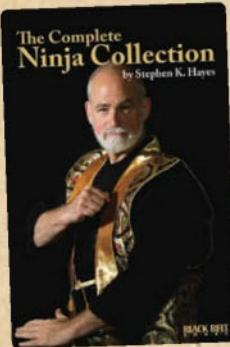
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EDITORIAL WITH SILVIO MORELLI



Safer, Stronger, Wiser

As Christmas approaches, there is much going on in the world that's reminiscent of this time a dozen years ago, when Australians were reeling from the first Bali bombing attack and there was a sense of fear and division in the community. In such times, martial arts can help us in more ways than one.

Having recently returned from Bali, I'm especially thankful that things have settled down and the resilient people there are again able to make a livelihood in the tourist industry. While the memory is still painful for many, terrorist attacks like the 2002 bomb blast, which killed 202 people including 88 Aussies, have become much less of a threat due to the diligent work of our two countries' authorities over a decade or so.

However, history never fails to repeat itself, it seems, and while the nature of the threat is a little different, it has manifested closer to home than ever for Australians, and the fear of extremism has again taken hold in 2014. As such, the issue of self-defence and how martial arts fits into the community has never been of more importance. Parents are thinking, are my children safe? Leaders are thinking, is our country safe?

Unfortunately, the answer is no. Without being sensationalist or wanting to promote irrational fear (there's enough of that in the media), it's a simple fact that we do not yet live in a world of peace or a crime-free society. That has never been the case, of course, and as such I encourage diligence, awareness and good training, but no more now than I have at any time in the past.

While Australasia is one of the better parts of the world, we are not immune to violence, whether it be simple street thuggery fuelled by rising use of the drug 'ice', or targeted attacks by those with an extreme ideology. Places that we might think are safe often offer little real protection at all — hence your first line of defence will always be you. Some might argue that there's little we can do in the face of such seemingly random violence, but I disagree. Although some things are out of our hands, even ordinary people can defend themselves if they learn how to take action — and given you're a *Blitz* reader and student of martial arts, I assume you're of this same thinking.

The martial arts should prepare us to face some of the toughest situations, and give us not only the skills to fight back, but the awareness to avoid and the tactical thinking

to take action earlier rather than later.

Martial arts is not just about 'fighting back' or 'standing up for yourself', though. As Bruce Lee said, "Notice that the stiffest tree is most easily cracked, while the bamboo or willow survives by bending with the wind." Martial arts should teach the weak to be strong and the strong to become wise — wise enough to adapt and look first for solutions beyond the physical, but to know that physical skills may sometimes be necessary, too, and not fear their use.

Compassion, courage, selflessness and friendship are qualities we can foster through martial arts that will extend beyond that once-in-a-lifetime incident. These qualities will also enable us to fit into society in a most valuable way and become a backbone by which we can stand true. And being strongly multicultural, the martial arts also provide a vehicle for many races and religions to share in this journey and help one another.

It's important to note, though, that these great aims of the martial arts are often overlooked at times when a general fear of violence is high in the community (as Victoria Police commissioner Ken Lay showed recently when he suggested that MMA 'in a cage' might somehow encourage street violence). So, we should be vigilant as to how we are perceived. We must be responsible caretakers of the martial arts, and stand up for what we believe in while being conscious of our place in society. The average person discovers martial arts through movies and images of violence, so we must ensure that the other sides to martial arts are preserved.

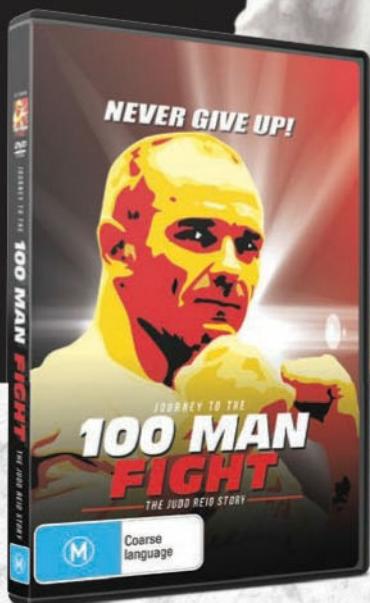
As we move towards Christmas, compassion, courage, selflessness and friendship are things to pride ourselves in.



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NEWS & EVENTS

Elite Team rises to the top at BJJ Pan-Pacs

Australian Elite Team dominated the competition at the 2014 ABJJF Pan Pacific Championships held at Melbourne Sports and Aquatic Centre from 10–13 October. In a landmark result for Australian BJJ, AET ended De Been 100% Jiu Jitsu's long-standing dominance at the event by topping the Male and Masters competitions and collecting third place in Female and Juniors competitors.

A landslide result in many respects, AET finished on 211 points in the Male competition — a whopping 111 points ahead of second-placed team Gracie Barra. Southside MMA was third.

In the Black-belt division Lachlan Giles from Will-Machado was the standout, winning his 79-kg division and then securing double-gold with a win in the Open-weight. AET's Michael Tohme was also a notable mention, winning his division and collecting silver in the open weight. The other double-gold performance in the Male competition was from Purple-belt Craig Jones of ISO BJJ, Adelaide.



There were arm-bars aplenty at the prestigious BJJ Pan-Pacs

The Female competition produced two double-gold medallists, with AET's Jo 'Boofy' Elia impressing in the Brown-belt division and Maromba's Livia Gluchowska doing the same at Purple-belt. In the Female teams standings, Maromba narrowly edged out Will-Machado.

Elated with the performance of his team, head of the AET Ninos Dammo took

to Facebook to express his joy.

"I would like to congratulate all my students for winning this competition. I love you guys so much. The victory belongs to each of you," said Dammo.

"To my brother and coach Gustavo Falciroli for supporting me, lifting me up and always guiding me. Thank you for everything, brother...we are the number one team in the entire Pan Pacific region, but

we are no better than the club with five students that train in their garage. If you love your training and you love your team, then you have already won. As for me, I love each of my students like there was only one of them. I won before this competition began and each day that I'm surrounded by my students and all my friends in the BJJ community, I continue to win."

WORLD CHAMPION ANDRE GALVAO VISITS BRISBANE

Multiple-time Brazilian jiu-jitsu world champion Andre Galvao visited Australia in October to conduct a one-off seminar and open the country's first Atos Jiu-Jitsu affiliate

academy in Wolloongabba, Brisbane. The Arte Suave jiu-jitsu school will be run by Antonio Mota and will look to build off Atos' recent success on the world stage.

A host of Australia's top Black-belts travelled to attend the one-off seminar and support the new school, including the likes of Thiago Braga from Sydney's Legacy gym. Galvao rolled with many of the higher belts at the seminar, wowing all in attendance.

"Thank you all you guys who came here and all the Black-belts who came from all over bringing their student to the seminar. That was awesome," said Galvao via Facebook.

"Thank you, Professor Antonio for everything. I'm very, very happy for you and I will be here always to help... I really enjoyed a lot Australia and I hope to get back very soon. The weather here is amazing — all [the] people and the food too!"

Atos is currently regarded as one sport jiu-jitsu's strongest teams, producing a number of world champions including Galvao, Rafael and Gui Mendes, Keenan Cornelius, JT Torres, Gilbert Burns and Claudio Calasans.



Galvao gets busy on the mat

PENGHUNNH

INJURY PROOF YOUR BODY



The seminar group with Mitchell and Palumbo (second row, eighth and ninth from left)

PALUMBO PARTNERS ESKRIMA WITH TKD

Grandmaster Vince Palumbo, aka 'GMV' recently conducted a huge seminar at United Taekwondo in Sydney, with over 100 instructors and students training together for more than six hours. GM Palumbo was assisted by two of his dedicated masters on the day, which included instruction in a broad range of styles.

The day started with a mixture of boxing, kickboxing and taekwondo, and offered students a different perspective on how to cover ground effectively and prepare for close quarters combat. Once warmed up, participants were paired up for some sparring. GMV explained the theory and then demonstrated the effectiveness of each technique on many willing instructors and students.

The afternoon session transformed United's basic taekwondo blocks and strikes into jiu-jitsu self-defence. Beginning with a low section block, students were taught to take an opponent to the ground into a

choke, which used a rising block to shut off the carotid artery, an outer forearm block to secure the elbow, and our inner forearm block to lock off the arm. GM Palumbo's approach was aimed to give a different perspective on self-defence without losing any respect of the dynamics of taekwondo, as practised by most of the students.

In a fitting conclusion, the seminar finished with a Cacoy Doce Pares Eskrima Filipino stick and knife defence technique focussing on the effectiveness of simplicity in motion.

"The versatility of the dagger captivated the members and the feedback suggested that adding eskrima techniques to taekwondo will only enhance the art. I would highly recommend the experience," said United Taekwondo head instructor Paul Mitchell.

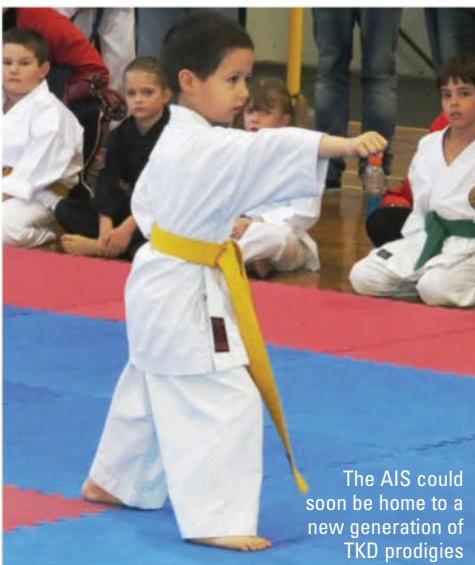
"United Taekwondo students gained a better understanding of the benefits of learning from a world champion."

AIS Taekwondo Athlete Clinics

The Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) will look to unearth the next wave of Australian taekwondo talent by coordinating four state-based taekwondo clinics around Australia in conjunction with Sports Taekwondo Australia (STA).

The clinics will be free of charge and are open to any emerging taekwondo athlete born between 1996 and 2001. Officials from each of the clinics will select a small group of exceptional medal potential taekwondo athletes to continue receiving support from the AIS.

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NEWS & EVENTS

GMVP back in Shanghai

Grandmaster Vince Palumbo continued his recent busy schedule in Shanghai, China, where he returned to demonstrate Filipino stick-fighting techniques to some of the students at Professor Stanley Tam's Shanghai Brazilian Jiu-jitsu Academy. The workshop was done over 30 hours and drew unarmed combat instructors from all over China.

GM Palumbo was also invited to demonstrate tactical law enforcement expandable baton techniques to members of Shanghai Police SWAT Team at Shanghai Police Academy. Aside from his extensive curriculum of 'Tactical Law

Enforcement Expandable Baton' training, GM Palumbo also taught weapon retention and disarming involving a knife, sword, bottle and iron bar.

"I taught the SWAT Team members for three days, and I was under their constant observation, especially from the chief director and all his leading high-ranking officers of the Shanghai Police Academy," said GM Palumbo.

"I had to do my best there to really impress these guys."

At the end of the workshop, the academy's chief director presented the GM with an official certificate of accreditation as one of the academy's official



Palumbo with Shanghai SWAT Team members

instructors for tactical law enforcement techniques.

"This was such an incredible presentation, because everyone applauded for me, and it was obvious to see that they all enjoyed my really informative workshops there at the Shanghai Police Academy," GM Palumbo added.

Speaking with *Blitz* upon his return from China, GM Palumbo shared his thoughts on the current state of law enforcement weapons expertise.

"Here in Australia, the law enforcement departments don't want to know me, because they think that they already know it all. This is a shame," said GM Palumbo.

"Because they don't know it all, and their techniques are not effective enough. I actually have police officers training at my academy to learn more from me, because it seems that they have been taught very little at the police academy. [There were] very limited techniques that they were taught, which were so very basic and outdated... Times are changing, and not for the best, either, so the law enforcement groups need to get better and more consistent training in the different areas of tactical response training, especially for the officers' own personal self-defence as well."

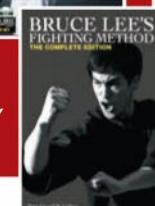
GM Palumbo now has four affiliated schools in China and is planning his next visit.

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BLUE SEPTEMBER

KARATEKAS KICKING OUT CANCER

Martial artists from the Goonellabah region in New South Wales got together in October to train and raise funds for the male cancer awareness foundation Blue September.

Martial arts clubs across Lismore were invited, with support from Shukokai Karate and Success Martial Arts making the day a successful one, as participants of all ages and experience levels took to the mats.

A local prostate cancer support group were also on hand to provide brochures, educate and help raise awareness among participants.

"We had about 20 people sparring almost continuously for two hours," said organiser and Lismore Karate instructor Mark McFadden in an interview with the *Northern Star*.

"We even had a Kyokushin karate club travel down from Brisbane for the event... It was a fantastic opportunity to test our skills against so many different styles, and we had raised money and awareness of cancers that attack men."

After the success of the inaugural event, organisers hope to make the gathering an annual date on their calendars.

HANSHI HAYNES' BREAK SETS WORLD RECORD

Hanshi Bruce Haynes, 10th Degree Black-belt and 47-time world *tameshiwari* (breaking) champion successfully broke the World Guinness Book record on 12 October at the World Budo Kan Association Festival of Martial Arts and Culture 2014 in South Australia. The 65-year-old set the new mark at 410 kg (16 slabs) of concrete with a single punch, surpassing the previous mark of 365 kg he set 14 years ago.

Hanshi Haynes embarked on a mission to surpass his old mark in order to raise money for a unique dojo orphanage in Zambia, Africa. The dojo, run by Sensei Jonathan Kruger, takes in orphan children and provides them with food, clothing, shelter and guidance. It was no doubt an emotional night for all those involved, with a teary Sensei Kruger the first to congratulate Hanshi Haynes with a hug after the break.

Channel Nine SA News were even

on site to capture the moment of the world record break and managed to get Hanshi Haynes' thoughts right after the big moment.

"I've never hit anything that hard before, anything that big," said Haynes. The punch resulted in a broken hand for the Aussie martial arts veteran, who says he will now retire from *tameshiwari*.

"Up until three weeks ago I thought I was actually going to have my finger (right index) amputated... My hand is broken, doesn't matter — just doesn't matter," he said.



Martial arts events calendar

LEGEND
■ AKKA ■ AFBJJ ■ AKF ■ TA

DECEMBER

5th–7th – Australian National Championships

For more information on 2014–2015 events and their respective organising bodies, visit the following websites:

Australian Kyokushin Karate Association (AKKA) – www.akka.com.au

Australian Federation of Brasilian Jiu Jitsu (AFBJJ) – www.afbjj.com

Taekwondo Australia (TA) – www.taeckwondoaustralia.org.au

Australian Karate Federation (AKF) – www.akf.com.au

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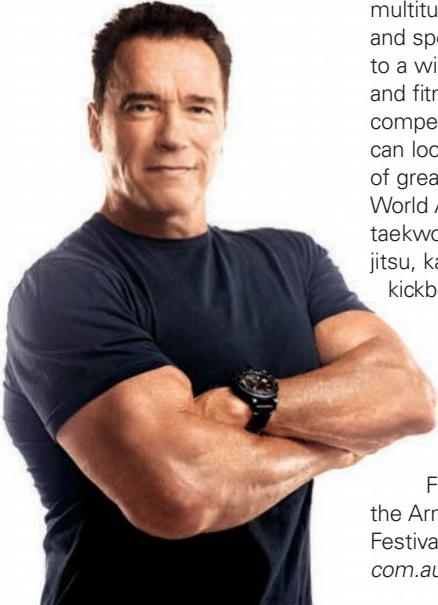
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NEWS & EVENTS

ARNOLD CLASSIC 2015 MARTIAL ARTS FESTIVAL LINE-UP TAKES SHAPE

The Arnold Classic Martial Arts Festival continues to take shape with Master Kelly Seif from Melbourne's XFC jumping on board as the promoter for the muay Thai and kickboxing competitions at the one-of-a-kind event.

Since beginning his martial arts training in 1979, Master Seif has gone on to establish himself as a respected trainer with over 20 years' experience. He is also a 5th Degree Black-belt Hapkido Combatives instructor and a 5th Degree Black-belt in taekwondo.



Master Seif joins event director and 6th Dan Geido Kai Black-belt Silvio Morelli as part of the martial arts promotional team. Other promoters include the likes of WASO president Jim Casey, taekwondo stalwarts Martin and Janette Hall, Kyokushin Black-belts Peter and Maria Rich, BJJ pioneer John Will, and 6th Dan Ishinryu master Bruce Hyland, with more to be announced in the near future.

Just like the world-famous Arnold Sports Festival in the USA, the Australian instalment is set to encompass a multitude of competitions and sporting events catering to a wide range of sports and fitness enthusiasts and competitors. Martial artists can look forward to a variety of great competitions including World All Styles (WASO), taekwondo, Brazilian jiu-jitsu, karate, kung fu, MMA, kickboxing and Kyokushin.

The Arnold Classic Martial Arts Festival is scheduled to take place at the Melbourne Exhibition Centre on 13–15 March, 2015.

For more information on the Arnold Classic Martial Arts Festival, visit www.aca2015.com.au

GM TOM LO HEADS NORTH

Grandmaster Tom Lo recently took time to officiate the annual Wing Chun grading and training seminar at Jade Wing Chun Club in Cairns, Qld, in October. Assisting GM Lo were the two club founders in Sifu Robert Storer and Sihing Grant Morris.

The seminar was deemed a success with over 50 participants in attendance and it even managed to bring in coverage from local newspapers and TV networks.

GM Lo used the seminar to teach the 'secrets' of Wing Chun footwork and outlined the philosophies of learning this art with deep respect.

Uniquely, one of the main focuses of the seminar was learning how to train martial arts and avoiding hurting or injuring your training partners.

Shihan Hans de Jong displays the certificate awarded to his late father, Soke Jan de Jong



Late Soke Jan de Jong receives posthumous honour

The Annual Australian Ju Jitsu Association (AJJA) Sydney seminar took place on 4–5 October at Olympic Park in Homebush. The seminar was again well attended, with jujutsuka travelling from all over Australia to be part of the event, which attracted 120 to the mat on Saturday and 85 on Sunday.

Perhaps the highlight of the event was a special presentation by Sensei Lynn Farmer on behalf of the WJJF UK. In a special moment, Shihan Hans de Jong accepted this posthumous award for his father, the late Soke Jan de Jong, who was awarded a 10th Dan.



Grandmaster Lo (centre, in red) with the Cairns team

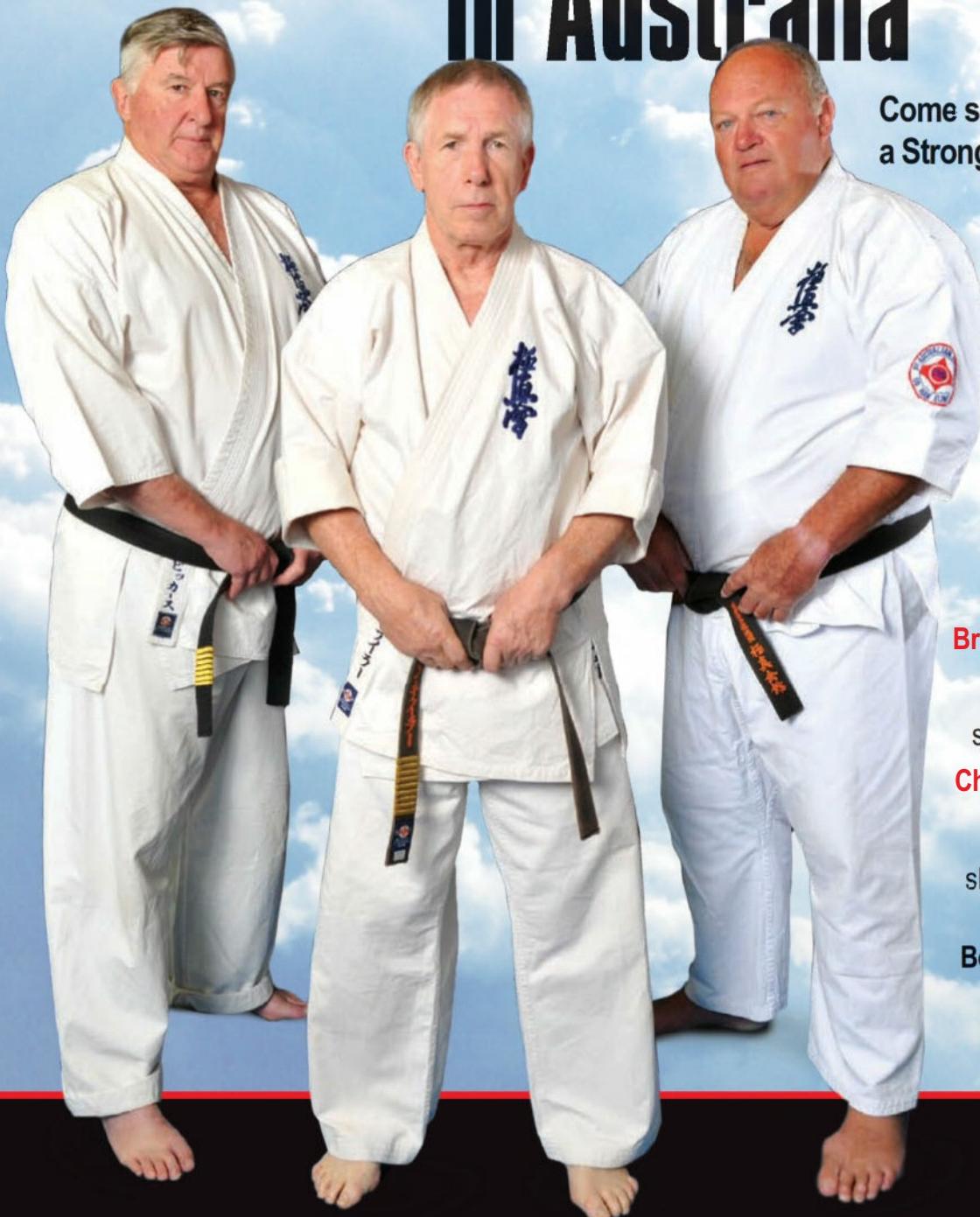
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MARTIAL MOVIES WITH CLINT MORRIS



Sly Stallone and Ronda Rousey having some pre-brawl banter

DVD REVIEW: THE EXPENDABLES 3

The *Expendables* films are movie manure — but each instalment has gradually been a better bowel movement than the last. The first was utter diarrhoea, the second endurable crap, and this third, sloppy but not as stinky as you'd expect.

Sylvester Stallone's third in the *Dirty Dozen* meets *Cannonball Run* hybrid trilogy essentially follows the same stencil as the first two: a bunch of old action vets team up to take down another old action vet while patronising themselves with quippy one-liners that usually pertain to their previous roles. Thankfully, they've cut back on the meta jokes this time around; they've also found themselves a couple of old sports who weren't told 'don't act, just play', and there's a plot that, while horribly thin, isn't half as diet-meat as the librettos of the previous chapters.

This time around, the Expendables — the usual crew, joined by series newbies Wesley Snipes, Ronda Rousey, Kellan Lutz, Antonio Banderas and Harrison Ford — go up against an old enemy of Barney's (Stallone), non-dutiful scumbag Conrad Banks, played by Mel Gibson (yes, he's that desperate now).

Aussie Patrick Hughes (*Red Hill*) serves up a slick-looking, super-energised action

movie here. Sure, the script is no match for Hughes' obvious skills behind the camera, but the movie is all the better for the injection of enthusiasm and imagination that Hughes brings.

In fact, it's the franchise's 'newbies' that actually bring most of the film's energy and supply most of its good moments: Wesley Snipes gives his most sprightly performance in a decade; Harrison Ford, though likely bored, has the best fake 'I'm having fun here' look of them all; and Antonio Banderas is amusing as the overeager middle-aged rookie. Best of all is Mel Gibson as the film's bad guy. Trying to elevate the film, Gibson really throws himself into the role of Banks, giving an enjoyably aggressive and welcomingly hammy performance as a formidable — if underwritten — villain.

The martial arts stars of the film — Rousey, Statham, and Snipes — don't get to showcase much of their skills, if only because there are too many characters here and only an hour and a half of film to share between them, but Rousey participates in at least one cool fight scene, set in a club.

The Expendables 3 hits DVD and Blu-ray on 11 December.

Jackie Chan's junk

Jackie Chan says he's not ashamed of his 'adult movie' past. "I had to do anything I could to make a living 31 years ago, but I don't think it's a big deal, even Marlon Brando used to be exposed in his movies," says the action legend. The adult comedy film, titled *All in the Family*, was released in 1975 and featured an exposed Chan in a sex scene.

Another actor with a dodgy film in his back catalogue is Chan's friend Sylvester Stallone. The Rocky star said he had no choice at the time but to do the soft-porn flick *The Party at Kitty and Stud's* — he needed to eat. "It was either do that movie or rob someone else because I was at the end — at the very end — of my rope. Instead of doing something desperate, I worked two days for \$200 and got myself out of the bus station."



Chan in the *Young Master*: not the most nude he's been on film

DACASCOS RETURNS!

Mark Dacascos (*Cradle 2 the Grave*; *The Crow* TV series) will star in *Ultimate Justice*, the next offering from Mike Leeder and Ruediger Kummerle's company Silent Partners. Plot details are being kept under wraps but considering this is the first film Dacascos has headlined in quite some time, he must've thought it good enough to come out of semi-retirement for. *Ultimate Justice* is due for release in 2015.



Mark Dacascos

ALBERT PYUN BETTING ON WRONG REDO

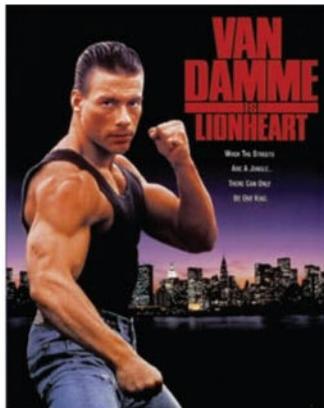
With a new incarnation of *Kickboxer* headed for the cameras, and both *Bloodsport* and *TimeCop* getting the redo treatment sometime soon too, it'd seem the back catalogue of Jean-Claude Van Damme is now a free-for-all in regards to Hollywood remakes. Albert Pyun, director of Van Damme's *Cyborg*, says he's been approached to direct a remake of *Wrong Bet* — but unlike the other JC remakes that are in the works, this one would again feature the Muscles from Brussels.

"I've been approached about directing a remake of Van Damme's *Lionheart* [the film's other name]

with Van Damme by the rights holding distributor," the filmmaker posted on Facebook. "Not sure if I will do this as it doesn't seem to be a film needing a remake. I guess I'd change the Los Angeles setting to Hong Kong, but I am not sure it fits in with what I do. But I told the rights holder I will consider it depending on how excited JCVD is about it. And if I can make it with my vision of it."

The distributor doesn't own the sequel rights, only the remake rights.

"I'm not sure a remake is in order except it would be nice to see JCVD flex those martial art



muscles again, especially against MMA fighters!" Pyun adds. "If I don't feel I can bring something new and better to it, I'll pass."

Pyun is also developing a film based on Napoleon, which he

wants Van Damme to star in. That film would shoot next April if it gets the go-ahead.

"The Napoleon shoot has to be set for next April due to weather in Croatia or Bulgaria. I think the distrib' wants this remake — or, in my case, re-imagining — to shoot this year."

Pyun says that if he decides to do the *Wrong Bet* redo, he hopes to get Sheldon Lettich, who wrote and directed the original, back to write the remake. He'd also like Sasha Mitchell, who played Van Damme's brother in *Kickboxer 2: The Road Back*, to co-star in the film.

RUSH HOUR TV SHOW GREENLIT

So much for a *Rush Hour* 4, hey? CBS has committed to making a *Rush Hour* series — and no, it won't star movie duo Jackie Chan and Chris Tucker. The TV remake is in similar tone to the New Line Cinema films and follows a by-the-book Hong Kong police officer who is assigned to a case in LA, where he's forced to work with a smug black LAPD officer who has no interest in a partner. Bill Lawrence (*Scrubs*, *Spin City*) is behind the series, with *Rush Hour* director Brett Ratner on board as an executive producer. The *Rush Hour* films have made New Line Cinema over \$850 million worldwide.



Pop singer has fighting chops

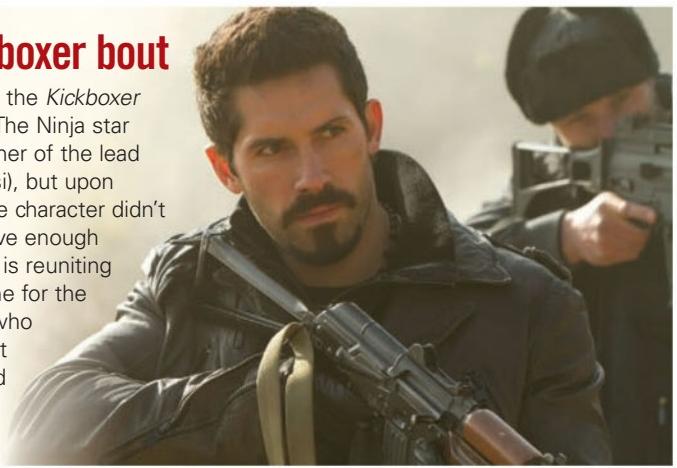
Frank Grillo, star of the new series *Kingdom*, which is set in a Mixed Martial Arts club, has come out defending the casting of pop singer Nick Jonas as his son on the show. "We have the same agent and when his name came up I said, 'No way. It's never going to happen. No way is he ever going to be on the show,'" Grillo said about Jonas. "They said, 'Let him come in and read.' He came in and read with 30 other guys. By the way, the kid was ripped, okay, really serious and he was by far the best actor of the 30. He won the job and he absolutely had to work twice as hard as everybody else. Then



they get him in the cage and did a three-week camp and he is probably the best athlete. This kid threw a standing triangle on Cub Swanson and everybody opened their eyes... The kid is amazing. I would put him in the cage with any amateur that thinks he is tougher than a Jonas brother."

Adkins forfeits Kickboxer bout

Scott Adkins will not be a part of the *Kickboxer* remake, as previously reported. The Ninja star was approached to play the brother of the lead character (played by Alain Moussi), but upon reading the script, he felt that the character didn't have enough to do and didn't have enough physical scenes. Instead, Adkins is reuniting with *Ninja* helmer Isaac Florentine for the film *Close Range*, about a man who lives on a ranch and must protect his family from crooked cops and a drug cartel. That one begins filming in December.



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BOOK: BRUCE LEE: THE EVOLUTION OF A MARTIAL ARTIST

In his new book *Bruce Lee: The Evolution of a Martial Artist*, author Tommy Gong traces Lee's path as he developed his martial art of Jeet Kune Do and his philosophy of self-actualisation. That path led Lee from Hong Kong to Seattle and then to Oakland and Los Angeles, and back to Hong Kong as he evolved from a student of Wing Chun to the founder of 'the way of the intercepting fist'. Through his quest for the ultimate martial art, Lee ultimately discovered himself.

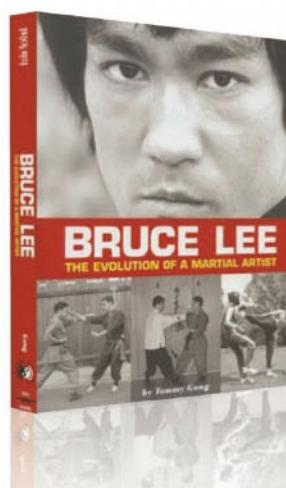
In his effort to chronicle Lee's progression in martial arts techniques and training methods, Gong had

unprecedented access to Lee's childhood classmates, former students and family friends. In addition, he had the cooperation of Lee's wife, Linda Lee Cadwell, and daughter, Shannon Lee, who provided rare and unique photos, letters and personal writings from the Bruce Lee Enterprises archives.

Bruce Lee: The Evolution of a Martial Artist offers a close, personal look into the world of Bruce Lee that makes for a must-have book for fans of the iconic movie legend as well as students of the martial arts and JKD.

Price: \$29.95

Supplier: www.sportzblitz.net/onlinestore



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5 MINUTES WITH WAYNE ABBOTT



A Pink-belt Who Never Gave Up

Master Wayne Abbott is a busy man. Not only does he run Sydney's popular Fighting Fit Martial Arts Centre and work full time as a sales manager, he is also the man behind the Pink Belt Dojo initiative — a martial arts-inspired program aimed at creating awareness and raising funds for those in need within the local community. Blitz chatted with Master Abbott to find out how he's bringing martial artists together for the cause, and how we all become 'honourary Pink-belts'.

INTERVIEW BY BOON MARK SOUPHANH

Wayne, how did you get your start in martial arts?

I started when I was 12, in 1978. I began with judo and studied until Blue-belt. A year later, I began taekwondo at Rhee International Tae Kwon Do under school Master Joe Gribble. My interest in martial arts and Asian culture goes back to my family history, as my mother was born in China and lived there until the age of 16. My grandfather was Chinese and my grandmother was Russian, and their family migrated to Australia in the early 1950s. Of course, my father is Australian and so we had some really interesting family gatherings! I got my Black-belt in taekwondo when I was 16 years and nine months old — I was the youngest Black-belt at the club then. I trained all through my HSC and then started my own school straight after as an instructor for Rhee International — I was 18 at the time. We were based in Mount Druitt and my first students were six mates from high school.

What styles have you trained in throughout the years and what are some key lessons you've taken from each of them?

I've always been open-minded to the benefits of cross training and have taken part in many workshops from visiting martial artists during the years, dabbling in a little karate, tai chi,

Master Wayne Abbott lives up to his nickname the 'Demolition Man' performing at local community events



kung fu and kickboxing — just enough to respect all styles. There is so much information available to martial artists these days and I have a library of DVDs that I share with my students. I love to watch MMA and greatly appreciate the skill of the combatants, but there is one trend that really interests me, and that is 'extreme martial arts' or XMA. I've developed a relationship with Mr Mike Chat from XMA in the United States and have an exceptionally strong group of extreme martial arts performers in our school. I look forward to the day when a potential customer calls on

the phone and asks, 'Do you teach extreme martial arts at your school?'

The first thing I ask any new student that walks through the door is, 'Why are you here?' I listen to what they have to say, I don't just hear it — that's something that's really important. When they tell me, 'I want to learn how to fight,' I will turn that around on them and ask, 'Who do you want to fight?' A lot of interesting stories from the students come out when I ask questions like this.

Besides the obvious physical benefits, how has

martial arts helped you in other aspects of life?

The great thing about martial arts is that it can be whatever it needs to be for you at any particular stage of your life. So, as an 18-year-old fresh out of high school and needing to earn an income, opening my first school helped me get by and make ends meet. Soon after, I joined the NSW Police Force during a period of reform — I have so much respect for the men and women of the police force. It is one of the toughest jobs, and my martial arts training not only kept me safe, but helped me cope with



Abbott presenting Pink-belts to youngsters in the program

some of the most difficult and emotional experiences that you could imagine.

Growing up, I lived in a household where there was domestic violence. When I was 15, I actually approached my father during a domestic incident and warned him not to touch my mother again. It was successful and there was no need for any physical confrontation between the two of us. I know that without martial arts, I wouldn't have been able to muster the courage to do that. I remember thinking to myself, 'If martial arts can do this for me, I can also do this for others' — that's when I decided I wanted to make martial arts my career.

Should martial artists make more of an effort to reach out to sufferers of domestic violence? How can we do this?

Yes, we should. I think people look to the martial arts as an industry that can help address domestic violence and bullying. Many martial artists preach this, but sometimes you need to do more than just talk about these issues — you have to convey these

messages in actions. This starts on the mats by teaching and adhering to the notions of discipline and respect. How you handle it from there depends on what you are told and you should refer the student to the appropriate support networks should you feel you aren't equipped to deal with their issues.

Business and martial arts seem like very different entities, but you've managed to tie them together in your life. How did this come about? What principles do they share?

I've had a diverse career. Besides martial arts, I really enjoy the automotive industry that I work in. I've been self-employed as a franchisee, worked for the fastest growing retailer in Australia, and coached business owners with turnovers as high as six million dollars a year as their franchise manager. I've also dealt with some of the best-known brands in middle and upper corporate management.

Through all of this, martial arts has always been the glue that's kept everything together. I believe martial arts is a great

tool for any entrepreneurial-minded young person — without a doubt, the martial arts Black-belt is the perfect business accessory. To be successful, you need to show respect to your competitors and ensure you are ethical in your dealings; to have discipline and be structured in your approach but willing to innovate and try something different and learn something new.

Did you find your expertise in this area helped you in starting up your own school?

Without a doubt. That, along with some friendly advice from [Blitz Publications CEO] Mr Silvio Morelli many years ago, provided the catalyst. For new school owners, there are some very good marketing and resource materials available to help your school grow. However, just because you are a good martial arts practitioner or instructor doesn't mean you will automatically be a successful school owner. I've definitely been able to apply my corporate and business experience to running my own school. I realised very early on that the school had to be

The Master's Tips

Master Abbott on what to consider if starting your own martial arts school:

Define why you're doing it. You'll face many challenges along the way, but if you go in with a clear idea of what your core values are, it will help you a lot. You have to adhere to these values in every class, so knowing why you're really doing it goes a long way to building success.

On managing time and setting goals:

I guess the ultimate goal for everyone is to make a living out of doing something they love, so finding enjoyment in what you do will go a long way making things easier. When I started my school, I made sure that I trained and developed other instructors. The school should always be bigger than one person. I've been on the end of some injuries; however, I've always had others from the school there to rally around me when I needed. If you give to your students, they'll give back.



Abbott as a 16-year-old Brown-belt in 1980

5 MINUTES WITH WAYNE ABBOTT

Master Abbott and the Pink Belt Dojo kids performing at a community event



bigger than any one person, including myself.

The other big factor in starting my school was in fact my daughter, Savannah. When she was six, we noticed that she was having some difficulties with reading and writing. It was a condition that could've easily been misdiagnosed as ADHD or something similar; however, we discovered it was in fact retained reflexes, a condition which causes them to gain or lose 20 different reflexes. You have to retrain the child through a series of physical activities in order to treat them, and various sources stated that martial arts was one of best things to teach children with this condition. After I started teaching my kids martial arts, my daughter ended up going from the bottom of the class to the top of the class in less than 18 months.

You speak of 'Black-belt excellence' in your school's syllabus. What is this concept?

I believe that most people would agree that the martial art Black-belt is a symbol recognised for its dedication to excellence and honourable achievement. To be able to dedicate yourself to something will require vision and a belief

in yourself. Excellence shapes what we repeatedly do and the good habits we form. Your achievements in martial arts depend on a community of people working together, and to be honourable means we must be congruent by making sure that we follow up, act and do what we say — simple as that.

More recently, you've launched the 'Pink Belt Dojo' program. Tell us a bit about what that is? What's the story behind the name?

I've always wanted to make sure that my school gave back to our local community. In 2011, one of the fathers from our school sadly passed away from cancer. He had three daughters training at our school, so we decided to hold an event to raise funds and support the family through the tough time. That experience got me thinking that I could potentially take this to another level, to the point where we could unite the mats between schools in order to give back to the community — when one mother from our school was diagnosed with breast cancer, this gave me real purpose to do so. I told her that we'd do anything we could to support her and her family, so we pulled something together in order to raise funds — that

would become the first ever Pink Belt Dojo event. My wife suggested the name and I thought, 'Why not?', as I was struggling to come up with names myself (*laughs*).

Literally hours after launching the Facebook page, I found out that one of the kids from our school had passed away in a car accident — it was devastating. So we were now running the event for two families in need, and the message was definitely one synonymous with the martial arts: to keep pushing forward through overwhelming odds. I have two big schools within five minutes' drive of mine — Hawkesbury Martial Arts and UTF Black Belt School — and they both threw their support my way, 100 per cent. We also got Mr Mike Chat down from the US along with two of his students; they were extremely supportive and were an inspiration. The two-day event was a huge success and at its peak had close to 400 people there with 150 participants involved. Our overall goal was achieved and we were able to donate \$2500 to the Bridget Wright Trust and \$3500 to support [the mother with] breast cancer. We look forward to working with other martial arts leaders and schools

to support those families in the martial arts community who face difficult times.

Do you feel there's a shift in the way martial artists approach working with one another? Are they keener to work with one another than in the past?

I choose not to be exclusive. Up until three years ago, our school never competed in tournaments, but now we are heavily involved in ISKA, NAS and other local competitions. As a school, I think we've broken down a lot of barriers within these tournaments. I give my students instructions to clap and cheer competitors from all schools and show gratitude towards all officials — win, lose or draw. I think that wins us a lot of respect, not just trophies. In running Pink Belt Dojo, other instructors trusted me with their students and weren't worried about students ever crossing over — at the end of it, it was all just a great big hug.

What do you hope to achieve in the rest of your career in martial arts, with your school, and with Pink Belt Dojo?

As for our school, we will continue to develop our students and instructors to provide them opportunities and grow the school. We adopted a shift towards situational leadership practices blended with our martial arts training a long time ago so that we developed strong links between their training and life skills. As martial artists, we often support the families in our schools — that's what we do. However, as leaders we have the ability to coach, mentor, motivate and inspire others to show compassion and support when needed. Therefore, we welcome enquiries from like-minded school owners around Australia that would like to nominate members within their school who need support and would like a Pink Belt Dojo event in their state. ■

KARATE'S Deadliest Secrets

From Okinawa's true masters

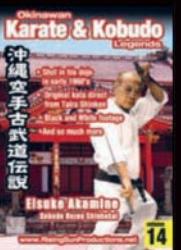
Discover never-before-seen moves and learn the combat secrets hidden in Okinawa's ancient karate kata from world-renowned masters. Own rare historical footage and experience the history of the island's most devastating fighting forms



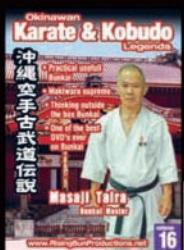
Meitoku Yagi:
Meibukan Goju Ryu



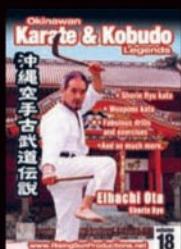
The Jundokan:
More Than Just
Kata



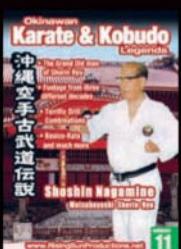
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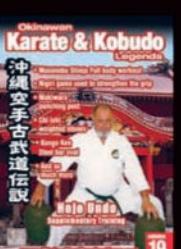
Masaji Taira:
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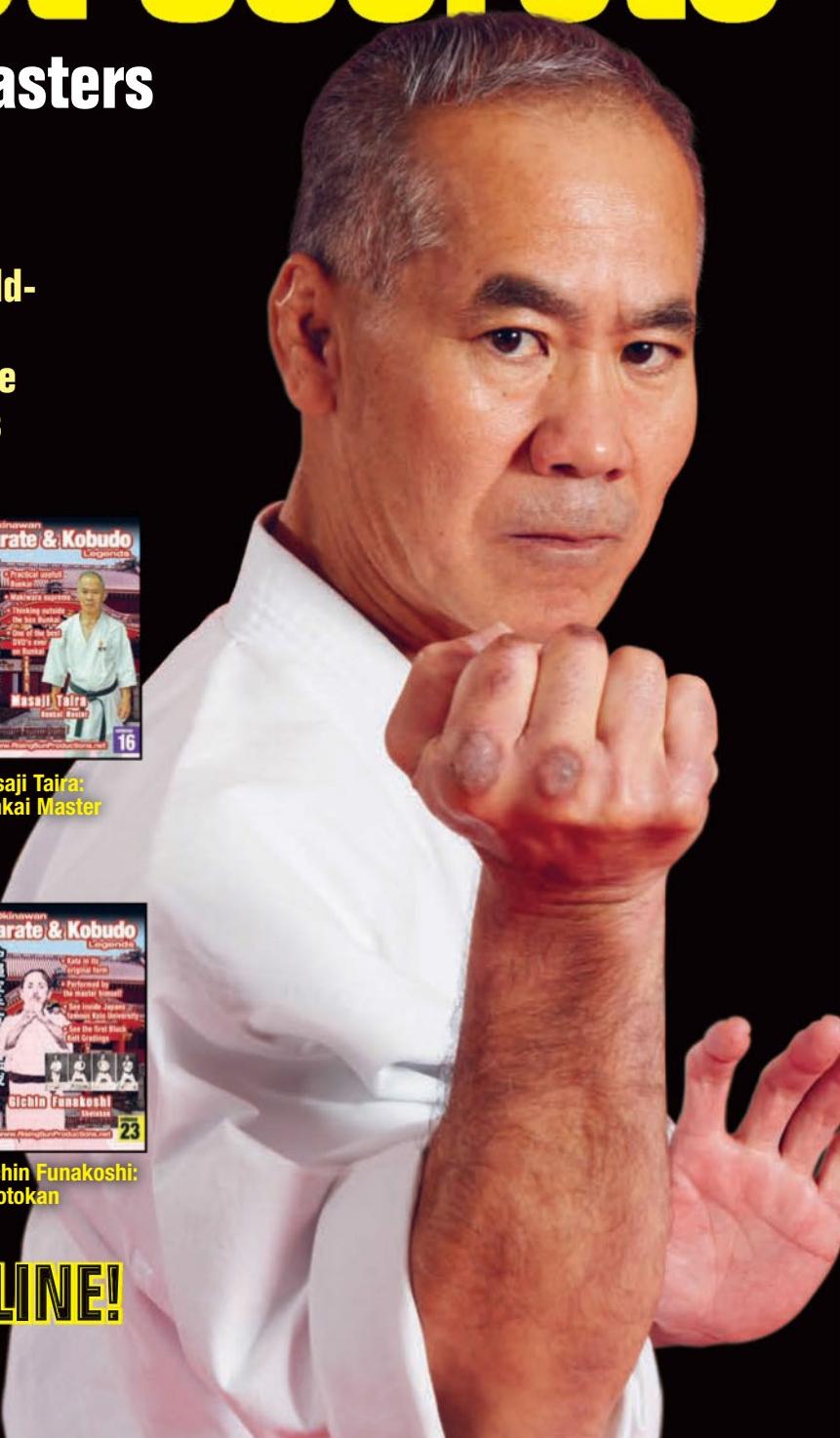


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SETTING

**Chikara kenpo chief
instructor Gary Palmer**

Coming from a long line of champion boxers, Shihan Gary Palmer was born ready for a bit of biffo and thus became a 'grasshopper' when he was barely knee-high to one. But his major achievements in the martial arts — the founding of the Chikara kenpo system and captaining the NSW National All Styles martial arts competition circuit, as he does today — came only after many years of hard training in various styles, during which he also built successful careers in the Australian army and NSW police force. Here, he tells *Blitz* what he learned about life, combat and teaching along the way.

STORY BY JARROD BOYLE | STUDIO IMAGES BY CLIVE GIRDHAM

Martial arts have been part of Gary Palmer's life for as long as he can remember.

"I started with boxing," says the 60-year-old. "I grew up with it. I come from a boxing family. My grandfather was Dave Palmer, who was both heavy and light-heavyweight champion of Australia. He held several titles — that was back in the days when they weren't so strict about weight; they let you fight up a division."

"My biggest thrill as a kid was going to his house and looking in his trophy cabinet, which stretched from wall to wall and from the

floor to the ceiling. My prized possession is his gloves, which he wore when he won his Australian title."

Dave's brother was Ambrose Palmer, famous both as an Australian boxer who held titles at middleweight, light-heavy and heavyweight as well as having played 83 first-grade Aussie rules games for the Footscray Football Club between 1933 and 1943.

"He was also Johnny Famechon's trainer when he won his world title in 1969."

Boxing was part of the family heritage, as was sporting skill. "Many of my tools came from [my grandfather]," says Palmer. Much of the advice he now

G THE STANDARD

CHIKARA KENPO VS FRONT-KICK



1

As his opponent moves toward him, Palmer notes the shift of his rear hip forward...



2

...and steps left, to the outside of the incoming kick, taking his target just offline...



3

...as he sweeps his hand down to redirect the leg and catch the heel, scooping it up from underneath.



4

Pushing the leg aside delays the attacker's return to balance, allowing Palmer to easily parry his foe's hand strike as he moves up the outside and slams an elbow into the ribs...



5

...then, with his foe moving backwards, Palmer hits the rear of his near knee, drawing it in as he follows through with his elbow...



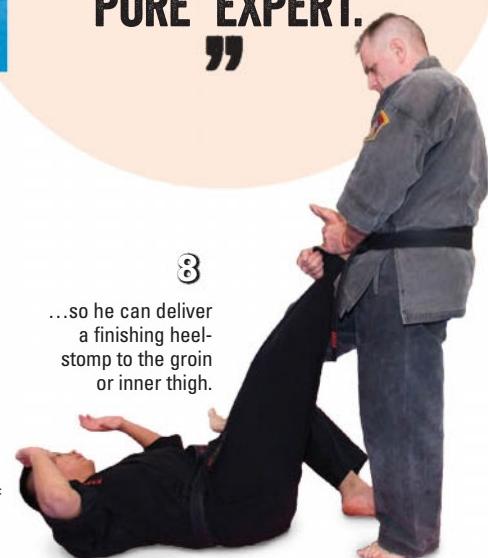
6

...taking the opponent down to his back with a push-pull motion.



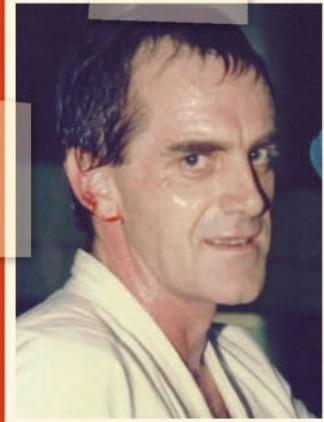
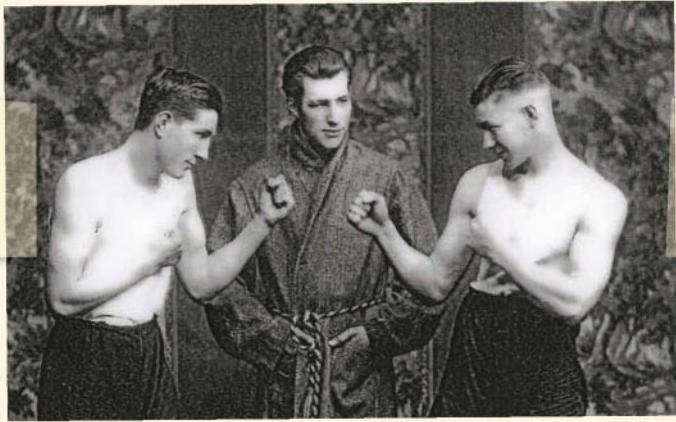
7

As his opponent hits the deck, Palmer maintains control of the leg to avoid being kicked and open up the target...



8

...so he can deliver a finishing heel-stomp to the groin or inner thigh.



Clockwise from top: A young Palmer (far left) in his army days; Palmer in more recent times as a NSW police officer; a little bloody after a karate grading; The fighting Palmers: Billy, Dave (Gary Palmer's grandfather) and Ambrose, who was also a star Aussie rules football player

passes on to his own students he first heard uttered by his pa — “You can’t hit a moving target”, and ‘Soon as you plant your feet, you’re a target” are among the favourites.

Palmer set about developing these and other skills at the local Police Boys’ Club in Paramatta. Many of the influential figures in Palmer’s early years were larger than life.

“The trainer was a man-giant named Gunther,” Palmer remembers. “If you weren’t training hard enough, he’d push your partner out of the way and take over!”

Boxing is alive in many of Palmer’s early memories.

“I remember sparring in the backyard with pa and dad. They were the best memories. My dad was away a lot in the navy; I adored my grandfather. I really enjoyed those times.”

Those older role models had a significant impact on Palmer. He, too, pursued a career in the

military, eventually becoming an instructor of artillery.

“I was an instructor in the school of artillery at Manly — ‘Bullshit Castle’, we used to call it. My father was a career sailor in the navy, and my grandfather had been in the army during World War Two. Having military parents meant they instilled a strict sense of self-discipline, self-reliance and respect. Treat people the way you want to be treated.”

Military life may have represented the inculcation of his values, but it also brought Palmer to a sense of his own calling as an instructor.

“I started instructing in the army in 1975 as a 22-year-old,” he says. “It was a big buzz. I found that, for me, being appointed as an instructor was a turning point, because I discovered leadership. It seemed to suit me. I enjoyed being in a position to help people.”

This is a most unusual definition of leadership, but is at the core of the best instructors’ and teachers’ approaches.

Army life also brought Palmer to his experience of Eastern martial arts.

“I played rugby and squash while I was in the army. Toward the end of the Vietnam War, I suffered a training injury playing rugby; my shoulder and elbow were smashed. A friend of mine was doing taekwondo... This was during the ’70s, when I was about 23.”

Palmer had been well prepared for the rigours of martial arts through his experience of contact sports.

“I loved [taekwondo]. It was hard training. I got broken fingers and toes! Then, when I got out of the army, around 26 or 27, family life took over.”

Some years later, Palmer found himself returning to training after a family member was assaulted.

“I had a young family, and my then-wife’s sister was attacked at work. It led us back to wanting skills to protect our family and ourselves. We went back [to martial arts training] as a family venture; my wife and my two kids all went back together.”

“I’ve been training with Gary for 20 years,” says Wayne Morrison, long-time friend and fellow instructor in Chikara kenpo. “All the kids joined; he made us feel welcome. My original purpose was because my son was being picked on at school. Gary began by giving him a crash-course in defence — no retaliation.”

“He was a good-natured, soft sort of kid and he was being picked on by a group,” Palmer recalls. “Rather than starting with the White-belt syllabus, I showed him how to break away from holds...how to get away.”

“He came to class one afternoon and went straight up

the back of the dojo and Wayne came to me and said there had been another incident. It turned out this time, his son had been suspended. The group had tried to attack him and he used a palm-heel strike to the chest. It sent the other kid flying into an air-conditioning unit and broke it. If anything, Wayne's son ended up becoming someone to whom other kids who were being picked on would come because they couldn't defend themselves."

In addition to values of self-discipline and self-reliance, Palmer's early experiences also taught him the value of family. This dedication to family formed the basis of the success of Palmer's club.

"He's thoughtful and family-oriented. Gary works to accommodate them as much as possible," says Morrison.

That approach was successful; all three of Morrison's children went on to achieve their Black-belts under Palmer's instruction.

Over time, Palmer began to gravitate towards kenpo.

"The thing that attracted me to kenpo was the self-defence aspect," says Palmer. "It's a self-defence art. Ed Parker [American kenpo founder] said that, 'Kenpo people don't get involved in a fight; they use a technique to finish it.'

"My style, Chikara kenpo, is a hybrid. We incorporate other influences and things. These days, if I see or learn something of use or benefit, I'm going to bring it in. I want to [produce] well-rounded martial artists, rather than a 'pure' expert."

Palmer's goal is to produce the most effective practitioner.

"To me, a martial artist has to have a well-rounded background. They transcend their learning and enter *mushin* or 'no mind'. You learn [the technique], but employ it without having to think too much about it. There's an old saying, 'If you have to think about it, then you don't know it'."

While this is true, self-defence is the purpose that functions as a guiding light in Chikara kenpo.

"Kenpo is fairly complicated; there are a lot of techniques. Kenpo people do three things at once: kick, punch and avoid. The idea

CHIKARA KENPO VS JAB



As his opponent begins shaping up and closing the distance...



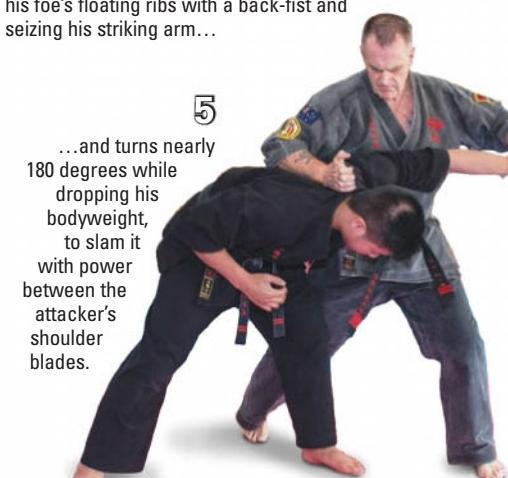
...he suddenly throws his rear hand but takes a full step in with it, rapidly bridging the gap; Palmer shifts to the outside, sweeping his left around to the rear, taking his centre off line as he covers.



As his opponent has committed and closed, Palmer continues forward, hitting his foe's floating ribs with a back-fist and seizing his striking arm...



...to draw his opponent forward and off balance, exposing his back. Palmer loads a ridge-hand strike...



...and turns nearly 180 degrees while dropping his bodyweight, to slam it with power between the attacker's shoulder blades.



Without pause, Palmer brings his rear knee through, clipping his foe's face if it's there, as he chambers the leg...



...to drive back through the inside of his opponent's near leg, reaping it out...



...so Palmer can drive the attacker forward into the ground, face down, and control him with an arm/shoulder-lock.

is not to get involved in a fight. You execute a technique and finish a situation."

Palmer was a natural fit as an instructor. Often those who gravitate to positions of authority do so for the status and material advantages but in Palmer's case, he was motivated by the desire to help others learn, which informs his strategies as a teacher.

"I always found he conducted himself very well," says Kancho Jim Casey, president of the National All Styles tournament circuit and founder of KenshinKan Karate, a full-contact style that grew out of Kyokushin. "Glenn Coxon was in charge [of NAS NSW] for about 20 years and after he left his position, I got talking to Palmer. He's taken it on...and we haven't looked back.

"His background in the army and the police force [means] that he's disciplined and has integrity. There are plenty of people [in martial arts] that are out to make a buck, but Gary takes pride in promoting others, rather than himself."

Casey's faith in Palmer is so assured, he recently paid Palmer the ultimate compliment by grading him to the rank of shihan in his own organisation. By Casey's reckoning, shihan is a rank that should only be awarded in recognition of the highest commitment, demonstrated via significant contribution to the art.

"Has he contributed to community? Is he a good citizen? He has to have conducted himself as honourably as possible," Casey explains.

But this was no 'honorary' grade given for time served, promoting the arts or simply being a good citizen — a good deal of Palmer's sweat was dropped on the dojo floor as he completed a feat that most fighters half his age would struggle with.

"I graded him over five hours. He had 40 fights of one-and-a-half minute rounds. He did them at 60 years old...he



JAMES CARRITT

Palmer with NAS president Kancho Jim Casey and the 2013 NAS grand champions

was pretty sore and tired after it!" Casey says. "I never grade anyone outside my organisation, but I did him."

Palmer looks to set high standards inside the dojo, but as Casey has recognised, they must carry beyond the *tatami*. Matthew Bryce, a Black-belt in Chikara kenpo and long-standing NAS competitor, has been following Palmer's example since he started high school. "At that point, I was slowly becoming an adult and learning about the world around me. Shihan Gary stood out; he actually took an interest in us as people," recalls Bryce, returning to Palmer's established theme of family. "[Chikara Kenpo] is a family-friendly club. Gary's interested in teaching you the art, but also that you grow up into a decent human being. He has a fatherly tone as a teacher, and really is a mentor to us.

"That's important when teaching something that is handed from generation to generation; there has to be a certain level of trust. The biggest single group [in the club] is kids and teenagers. [They are] looking for guidance for how they want to grow up and how they want to be. An instructor plays an instrumental role in people's lives."

It's a role Palmer seems more than happy to play.

"You've got to identify what works for each individual student. Try and identify early on how that student needs to receive information," he says. "Some students need words, others can mimic and copy. Others need you to physically move their hands and feet to where you need them to be. The main thing is that they have to feel good about themselves. They have to see the positive outcomes from it."

Palmer's way of facilitating this is to "try to put a correction in between two compliments — it tends to work!" he says. His Black-belts are taught to do likewise. "Teaching is all about how someone needs to receive that information," he explains. "You can yell your head off and one student will take it all in, while the other student may as well have heard French. Every student is different."

As well as being the state director of the National All Styles Tournament in New South Wales and the ACT, Palmer is also the assistant national director under Jim Casey. His involvement with the tournament began in his own time of competing, then with Renshu Kai.

"I've been with the NAS for 18-to-20 years now," he says. "Our club had branches in Melbourne and Brisbane,

and I competed in both states. I also competed on the Gold Coast, and then I started to run tournaments here in New South Wales. It became a big club thing."

As with his time in the military, Palmer was quickly attracted to a supervisory role for pragmatic — as well as idealistic — reasons.

"The officials knew the rules. It helped you as an instructor. Right from the early days, I was competing and refereeing, back and forth at the same event. Now, I ask people to do exactly the same thing...and they do it!"

Crucial to the success of the events are those who give their time and effort for free.

"Right from the early stages, I wanted to become an official. I saw the dedication of those doing it; without officials, there's no tournament. You have to have people willing to give their time in order to make it happen."

Palmer believes tournaments such as the NAS provide the opportunity for students and practitioners to test themselves and their training, to discover if they have simply learned a technique, or actually know it.

"Anyone can set a goal, but unless it's your goal, you won't care," says Palmer. "I have students that don't want to be

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champions but want to test their skills. The trophy is a bonus. You can get students to try their hardest, to do the best they can. I say to them, 'The only person you have to defeat, or be better than, is yourself.'

This sounds like an idealistic piece of wisdom, but in the pantheon of Palmer's teaching, it's a very practical piece of instruction.

"I can't say to a student, 'Come back tomorrow and be better than Matthew'. Just come in tomorrow and be better than yourself."

"The beauty of the National All Styles is that it gets you out of your comfort zone. It teaches you to adapt; you might have six opponents on the day, and you can't fight all of them the same way. You have to adapt to each one and the situation you're in. If you can't adapt, you get beaten. If you get attacked on the street, you can't define the rules. You've got to cope with what comes."

Ultimately, Chikara kenpo isn't an abstract art and Palmer's efforts all tie back into its origins as a system of self-defence. Yet he finds that students who compete progress faster than those who don't. "Sometimes, the best teacher is yourself," he reasons. "I've got the utmost respect for those who step onto the mat to be judged. It's a big step in anyone's training career."

The values taught through competition are somewhat abstract, in comparison with the practical realities of kicking, punching and blocking.

"They learn to have faith in themselves; trust themselves," Palmer says. "I tell them, 'When you line up on the mat... the other person has the same worries. Psyche them out by the way you conduct yourself.' As an instructor, you want them to have self-esteem."

This confidence comes from deploying their learning under pressure. "NAS is a great tournament for learning that your style doesn't have the answer to everything."

says Bryce. "A fighter from taekwondo will use his legs for a jab and will want to fight at long range. Then, you might get a boxer who wants to be in close and body-block. For each style, in its strength lies its weakness. You learn the ups and downs, strengths and weaknesses of different styles, which makes for a better-rounded martial artist."

Palmer's perspective takes in the practical aspects of competition, along with the broader implications for every participant.

"Students get confidence by using their assets," he says. "They learn what their good techniques and strong points are. One student used to tell me how nervous he was. I used to tell him, 'If you weren't, I'd be worried. You'd be apathetic.' If you're nervous, it makes you adrenalised and sharp."

Even though competitive spirits are high among the wide range of martial arts styles that take part in NAS, which often have nothing to connect them other than rivalry, Palmer says it all takes place in a spirit of inclusion and enjoyment.

"The range of ages of the participants is between five and 55. It's a place to practise their art in a safe environment," says Palmer. "The spirit and camaraderie on the floor is amazing; the students fight each other and hug at the end. That's what it's all about."

In contrast to this, Palmer's 11-year career as a police officer working in security and protection has highlighted the strengths of his martial arts training in the face of real conflict rather than just friendly fisticuffs.

"To have good reactions and to be alert and aware are great assets to have. Your skills become an inherent part of you that you're not always conscious of," he says. "It's given me a level of confidence that I wouldn't have had."

Palmer is quick to point out, though, the difference between martial arts and police defensive

tactics or 'deftac'. "Deftac is designed to defuse things, not pre-empt them. Your objective is to protect the officer, the member of the community, or even sometimes protect people from themselves."

Palmer's career as a martial artist effectively began after his experience in the military, and was brought into focus through the lens of boxing as taught to him by his family. This practical experience has shaped his opinions on the notion of 'realistic' martial arts training.

"I came from military training to martial arts training. Military training is, by nature, real life. It's 'life or death' sort of training, by necessity," Palmer muses.

That sensibility guided his choice of a suitable art.

"I sought out 'real' martial arts training. It needed to be hard and realistic," says the kenpo master. "'Reality-based training' has become a bit of a cliché; instructors want training to be relevant. I hate training that is soft and compliant with a partner — soft and touchy-feely."

"If someone grabs you in real life, they're not just going to let you roll their hand over. You have to execute some sort of 'pain compliance', as we call it in kenpo. You attack the groin, throat or eyes to create a reaction and work off that reaction. No one's just going to softly comply."

The word *budo*, used to describe traditional Japanese martial arts, literally refers to 'the warrior's road'.

Palmer's career in martial arts has been vocational, and features a number of significant destinations along the way. Those destinations — namely boxing, a military career followed by immersion in karate, then kenpo, culminating in a career in policing — define a leader who walks this road especially mindful of those following behind him. ■

**SOMETIMES, THE
BEST TEACHER
IS YOURSELF...**
**I'VE GOT THE
UTMOST RESPECT
FOR THOSE WHO
STEP ONTO
THE MAT TO BE
JUDGED.**





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CHOKING

On Reality

To choke or not to choke...?

Chokes as self-defence techniques have courted some controversy over recent years, with some security and law enforcement groups having banned their use. Here, Brazilian jiu-jitsu expert John Will weighs into the debate over their effectiveness versus their potential lethality, and shows how to apply them correctly.

STORY & INSTRUCTION
BY JOHN B WILL
IMAGES BY CHARLIE
SURIANO



I remember when I first experienced being choked into unconsciousness — well, I remember the before and after. It was an enlightening experience.

It was a dark and stormy night...just kidding. But it was, in fact, after dark. Aussie world champion kickboxer Stan Longinidis and I had been invited to Gene LeBell's house for dinner. For those who don't know, Judo Gene LeBell is an iconic grappler from Los Angeles, who has led a colourful life as a stunt coordinator, movie star, professional wrestler and judoka.

Anyways, after a great dinner, and many a question about his days as a pro wrestler, I posed a question that had been rolling around in my head for some time: "Do sleeper holds really work?"

"Well," replied a smiling Gene, "Let me put you in the sleeper, you can count backwards from 10, and we'll find out?"

I agreed. And as Stan looked on from the couch, Gene wrapped a burly arm around my neck. Ten, nine, eight, maybe seven...can't remember. After a very vivid (and strangely technicolour) dream, I found myself swimming my way back into consciousness. The first thing I noticed was

Gene's less-than-handsome face smiling at me; I think I yelled! The second thing I noticed was Stan standing on the couch as if he'd seen a mouse, yelling, "That is crazy!" or something to that effect. But that night, my view on the efficacy of chokes was solidified. I vowed that from then on I'd study them from every conceivable angle. Coincidentally, it was only a week or two later that I headed down to Brazil and began that very task. This all took place in 1986, if memory serves me right.

Since then — or more precisely, since a few years after the advent of the UFC (around the mid-1990s) — BJJ has

enjoyed a level of growth that has been as rapid as it has been unflagging. We now see BJJ competitions with competitors numbering in the thousands. Who would have thought it? And with that growth there has been a popularisation (dare I say 'normalisation') of the idea that chokes are a very, very effective tool (even strategy) for winning fights. Chokes have gained public acceptance much in the same way as have the use of kicks, knees and elbows since karate, kung fu and taekwondo replaced boxing as the average Westerner's go-to style of combat.

I have personally used chokes to render many people

unconscious on the mat (often accidentally when my opponent had refused to tap out); and on several occasions on the street. The result was always the same: after a short 'nap', the recipient of the choke regained consciousness and was none the worse for wear. Job done. I speak here of my personal experience, and do not imply that others should do the same. Instead, let's just look at a few of the pros and cons of applying chokes and strangleholds.

Pros: Chokes can be a very effective means of bringing a dangerous (e.g. drug-affected) antagonist under control as they do not rely on the opponent being susceptible to

unconscious can be run over by a car, for example. Things can (and do) sometimes go badly — another reason that proper training is required to ensure that we are alert to the state of our attacker and thus not holding on to a choke after they have been rendered unconscious, and that we don't leave them in a vulnerable position (having first ensured the safety of ourselves and anyone we may be protecting).

Cons: Anytime we are 'controlling' an antagonist, there exists a certain amount of inherent risk. Chokes are no different. An opponent left

REAR CHOKE APPLICATION ▾



Will blocks his opponent's forward shoulder and seizes an arm...



...controlling the wrist as his other hand scoops deep under his foe's armpit...



...to drag the opponent forward of his centre as Will shoots past him...



...and establishes a rear body-lock, pinning one of the arms.



Will then moves his grips up higher to the opponent's biceps/shoulders and stomps out the back of one knee...



...bringing his opponent down backwards. Will then feeds his left arm under his opponent's and grips his right wrist...



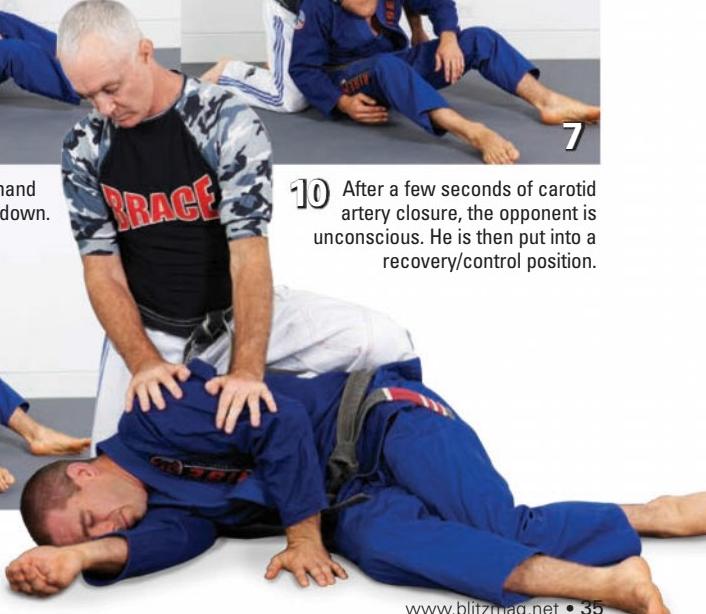
...before sliding his right forearm into a 'V' in the point of which sits his foe's throat.



Will then brings his left arm over the opponent's shoulder...



...and grips his biceps with his right hand while using his left to crank the neck down.



10 After a few seconds of carotid artery closure, the opponent is unconscious. He is then put into a recovery/control position.

REAR CHOKE



Controlling grip: one arm over the shoulder and the other under the armpit, gripping the wrist.



Bring the top arm up into a 'V', hand to shoulder (so there's pressure only on the carotid arteries, not the trachea).



Next, bring the other arm over the opponent's shoulder — bent in tightly, elbow down and fist up...

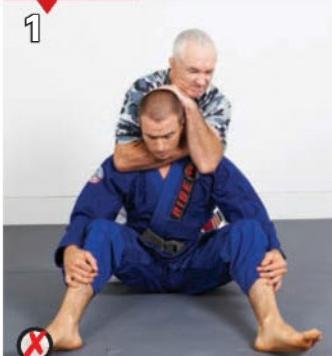


...then 'hide' your hand in behind the opponent's head, palm out. Push your chest forward and squeeze to choke.

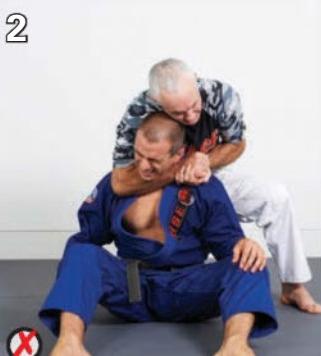
**"The result was always the same:
after a short 'nap', THE RECIPIENT OF THE
CHOKE REGAINED CONSCIOUSNESS AND WAS
NONE THE WORSE FOR WEAR.
Job done."**

CORRECT

WRONG



Pressure is applied to the trachea; less effective and dangerous.



Same again: more pain, but less precision and control = more danger.

pain-compliance techniques — meaning, those that force an opponent to comply through the delivery of pain — which often fails to work in real-life scenarios as our foe's pain threshold may be greatly increased by drugs or even just the adrenaline.

There is, though, another reason for advocating the use of chokes when circumstances warrant it, and this may become apparent by asking and answering the following question: What is the alternative?

Striking (punching, kicking, kneeing, elbowing, headbutting) an opponent until they are rendered incapacitated is the most commonly employed alternative. And what are the ramifications of using those strategies? They are often many and ongoing.

The physiology of choking is simple: we are cutting off the oxygen supply to the brain. This is done, ideally, by applying pressure to the carotid artery, the jugular vein and the trachea (windpipe) — by slowing the supply of blood to the brain through the carotid; by slowing down how quickly the de-oxygenated blood vacates the brain through the jugular; and by stopping the oxygen from entering the system in the first place by applying pressure to the trachea. This sends a message to our opponent's brain that there's not enough oxygen to run the whole body, so shut everything down, except the vital stuff, such as heart and lungs. The most common outcome of the choke (almost regardless of the type) is that after five-to-10 seconds of the brain being deprived of oxygen, the opponent lapses into unconsciousness. Provided the choke is released within a few seconds of their passing out, resuscitation becomes unnecessary, as the oxygen starts being delivered to the brain again, and the person wakes up of their own accord; usually within 10 seconds or so.

After choking someone out, it's important to place them in the 'recovery position' on their side, just in case they decide

to vomit upon waking. Some people often come out of their little nap, flailing and jumping around, highly confused, so it can pay to keep them under control for those few seconds so they don't injure themselves (or you).

So, from my perspective, the use of chokes is, in many ways, a more humane strategy than the 'punch them until they stop moving' strategy. There are many, many more deaths occurring as a result of striking than there are from the application of choking techniques.

But what about the use of choking (also called 'vascular neck restraint' or VNR) techniques in law enforcement circles? In my view, these techniques are an important tool that should be included in the arsenal of military and law enforcement personnel alike. Of course, it needs to be understood that the use of VNR techniques have their place in an overall force continuum strategy. Some police agencies allow the use of VNR techniques to be taught in their defensive tactics programs (and subsequently used on duties) and others do not. I submit that many of the departments that do not allow their use have prohibited them largely because they were ignorant of the pros, cons and efficacy of their use.

When viewed in isolation, it is possible to put forward arguments that highlight the dangers of using vascular neck restraint as a control option. But the reality is this: defensive tactics techniques are rarely applied in isolation — that is just not how the rapidly evolving and dynamic nature of interpersonal conflict works! And when we look at it from the larger context, an obvious question arises: How do VNR techniques stack up against other use-of-force options during violent conflict? What are the alternatives when things have gone close, personal and lives are on the line?

Consider this excerpt from an article in *Police – The Law*

SIDE-CHOKE-VERSION 1 ↴

CORRECT

1

Will uses his head and shoulder to control his opponent's near arm...

2

...then drives up and in to lift his opponent's head and slide his arm through underneath....

3

...clamping his palms together (Gable grip) as he again 'bases out' to close any gaps.

4

Will then drives his shoulder and head into his opponent as he pulls his right arm in to effect the choke.

Enforcement Magazine, titled 'Reconsidering Carotid Control':

Carotid restraint is very effective in controlling EDPs and subjects experiencing an agitated-chaotic event or presenting with excited delirium because the hold generates a painless unconscious state in 7-to-10 seconds. The ability to quickly and efficiently render an agitated-chaotic subject unconscious significantly



SCAN PAGE
TO READ
'RECONSIDERING
CAROTID
CONTROL'

minimises the risk of in-custody death that often results from prolonged struggles, as well as the physiological exhaustion and cardiac stress created by multiple applications of other force options. The psychophysiological dynamic of "pain-panic escape



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CORRECT SIDE-CHOKE VERSION 2 ↵

As Will drives up and in to lift his opponent's head and slide his arm through, he opens out his free arm...



1



...and brings his left elbow in tight and low behind his foe's head, so he can place his biceps directly into his right palm.

2



Will then cups his own head with the other hand and squeezes, putting his bodyweight into the choke.

3



SIDE-CHOKE ↵

Here, Will is not using a strong base to pressure his opponent...



1



...and does not drive into him for control and to get his right arm easily around the head.



2



Not propping on his right elbow limits Will's ability to reach his biceps...



3



...and to then reach up to his own head. Gripping his opponent's head instead...



4



response" normally associated with ECW drive-stuns and body compression upon the resisting subject is also greatly reduced.

There have, it is true, been a handful of instances where subjects of an arrest procedure have died after having been rendered unconscious by choking techniques. But when we look more deeply into those situations, we find that the choking was 'proximate' to the deaths (i.e. the last thing that happened before the death) and not necessarily the 'cause' of the death. There are many factors to be considered. Also, it is worth considering that many, many more deaths are caused by the use of percussive trauma, gunshot, and even capsicum sprays, tasers, etc.

Some more recent (and in-depth) studies have shone a much more positive light on the use of VNR techniques in law enforcement. For example, the *National Study On Neck Restraint in Policing* — prepared for the Canadian Police Research Centre — had this finding:

"This report finds that, while no restraint methodology is completely risk-free, there is not medical reason to routinely expect grievous bodily harm or death following the correct application of the vascular neck restraint in the general population by professional police officers with standardised training and technique."

I believe that VNR techniques have their place in any self-defence arsenal, whether it's for civilians or law enforcement professionals. They are highly effective and undoubtedly a better option than

lethal force. Many professionals believe them to be a better option than the use of percussive force, too, but I'll leave that question to be answered by each of our readers according to his or her own reasoning. In my opinion, though, particularly in real-life violent encounters, chokes are extremely effective and work on people irrespective of size and levels of motivation.

Needless to say, putting people into a state of unconsciousness should be viewed as a potentially risky thing to do, so such techniques need to be taught by professionals, and should not be applied by people who have not undergone the relevant training. Obviously, the 'sleeper hold' should not be used as a party trick. A recent video of a backyard fight in Brazil in which two teenage boys labelled 'MMA fans' saw one choke another to death with a side-headlock — a common schoolyard technique that is easy to escape from with a little training — is a sobering reminder of this. Not to mention, had the boy applying the choke known what the ultimate effect of his choke would be, and had he been educated just enough to be able to recognise the signs of his opponent's imminent demise even during their heated altercation, things may have ended differently.

With these techniques now out there in the public domain, getting an education in how to defend against them and apply them safely has never been more important. ■

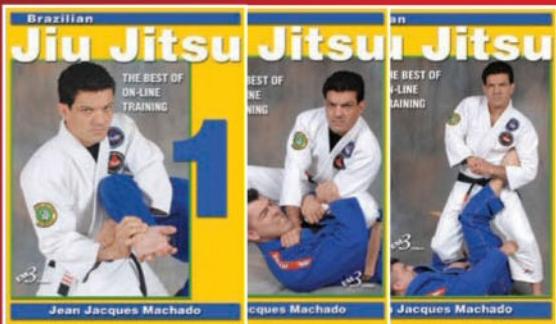


5

...does nothing to assist the choke and in fact the angle of Will's arm prevents him driving in deeper to apply pressure.

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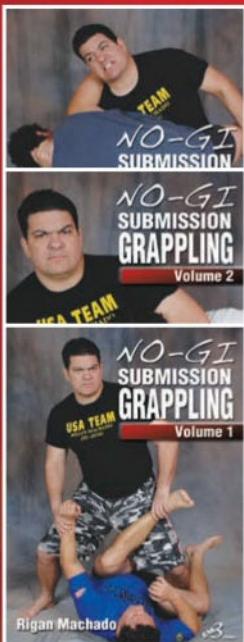
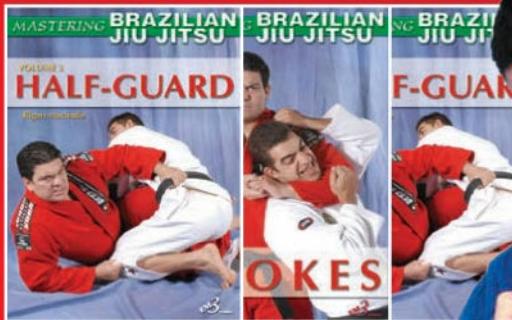
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POWER INTERNAL

An interview with Master Hai Yang





Kung fu master Hai Yang teaches in Montreal, Canada, where he has lived for 11 years, but he was born and raised in a Chinese city that is a hotbed of the country's traditional martial arts — Tianjin. It was there that he received an education in the Chinese combat systems that would be hard to match. As well as studying Chinese medicine, qi gong and meditation, Master Yang has spent the better part of his life immersed in the 'internal' kung fu styles: taiji (tai chi), bagua and Xing Yi. In part one of this in-depth interview taken from author Jonathan Bluestein's book, *Research of Martial Arts*, Yang gives an insight into his history, the culture of these systems and the most important lessons he's learned.

INTERVIEW BY JONATHAN BLUESTEIN

Master Yang, both Ma Hong and your uncle were students of Chen Zhaokui, son of Chen Fa'ke. Both father and son were very famous, and their lines of Chen taiji are the most popular to this day. I wasn't aware that you were Ma Hong's student...

Yes. Ma Hong gave me a really detailed instruction on the postures and movements. He taught me how to break each movement into smaller ones and see all the applications and possibilities. He had the idea that the Chen style form should be standardised in the way that it is taught. There is a difference between Ma Hong's form and my uncle's form. My uncle focused on *fā jin* [发劲, explosive power] while Ma Hong focused on structure.

How would you compare their forms to Feng Zhiqiang's form?

Feng Zhiqiang created his new form. The [older] Chen Fa'ke form, which I call the Chen Zhaokui form [Zhaokui was Fa'ke's son] is more focused on the centre — on the internal turning of the Dan Tian area, which is called 'Dan Tian Nei Zhuan' in Chinese. The Dan

Tian twists a lot, and this relates to many *qin-na* [joint-lock]

applications. Hong Junsheng loved his art form a lot. While he learned directly from Chen Fa'ke, he modified his teacher's form according to his understandings. His form became very 'compact', and I believe it was greatly influenced from Chen Xin's book on taiji quan. I have researched that book and reached the conclusion that Hong's school was probably very much influenced by it. I also think that Hong had just a little bit of background in Wu style taiji, and he might have implemented a few ideas from that style. I learned that [Hong Junsheng's] style, it's very combat-oriented, with a lot of small turnings. Hong contributed a lot to the Chen taiji community.

Who were your teachers, besides those we've already mentioned? What made each of them unique to you, and what are the most important lessons that you learned from each of them?

My first teacher was my grandfather (Yang Qinglin, 杨青林). I started learning from him at about seven years old. There was no asking 'why' I had to train — they [my family] told me, and I had to do it. It was a tradition that in each generation [of our family], one person will be chosen to practise martial arts. My grandfather was the chosen one in the family in his generation. Then later, in my father's generation, my father didn't do anything about martial arts training. He couldn't even memorise

the first movements of the taiji form. So my uncle became the martial arts practitioner of their generation. Then in my generation, I became the only one in the family to practise martial arts. My grandfather later became old, so he introduced me to many of his [martial arts] friends. My father knew many martial artists. In Tianjin, where I come from, up to about 30 years ago, maybe even five-to-10 years ago, martial arts were extremely popular. You could find a great teacher at any place [in the city]. So I started learning Xing Yi from my grandfather's friends, one by one. After them, I learned Xing Yi from three other important teachers.

My grandfather learned from a friend of Li Cunyi (李存义). Li was a very prominent and influential teacher in the history of Xing Yi Quan, whose name was Zhang Zhaodong (张兆东), who later went on to invent his own art, Xing Yi-bagua Palm, which is a mixture of the two arts in its name. Both Li and Zhang were considered my grandfather's teachers, but he didn't study much from Li. Rather, he worked for Li, in Li's bodyguard escort services company [at the time, many martial arts groups in China were making a living from providing bodyguard services]. In this line of work, those men would risk their lives daily in real life-and-death confrontations using the martial arts they knew.

Another teacher of mine was Hu Jingling (胡金岭). He was

My first teacher was my grandfather.

I started learning from him at about seven years old.

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Martial arts are a cultural phenomenon. They cannot survive without the cultural context.
”



Qiang (spear) technique is often credited as the foundation of the empty-hand Xing Yi system

also a student of Li Cunyi's student. I learned from him for a total of 1.5 years, maybe some more. I'd go to his home to practise in summertime. My grandfather was old and wouldn't show a lot of *fā jin*; Master Hu, though, was in his fifties, I think, and his force was still very powerful and impressive. My grandfather sent me to him to learn how to use Xing Yi's *fā jin* correctly. I also learned bagua from him.

Another student of Li Cunyi I learned from was Fu Shoubo (傅寿伯). I learned a little bit of Xing Yi from him, and mostly bagua. He also taught me the Quan Pu [拳谱, Xing Yi's classic of martial theory] in depth. [Jonathan: It's

interesting to note that master Yang Hai can be considered a direct gongfu grand-student of Li Cunyi, and it is possible that he is the last remaining person on Earth who can claim such a title.]

I learned the Xue Dian branch of Xing Yi from two different people. The first one was Zhang Songlin (张松林), who was a friend of my grandfather. He was taught Xue's style of Xiang Xing Shu [an art Xue created from Xing Yi Quan and other arts] by Xue Dian himself. The second teacher was Liu Zhihe (刘志和). I also learned this style from other people. Zhang Songlin taught me most of what I know from that style. I

cannot tell for how long these people have been Xue Dian's students, as I couldn't ask at that time [Jonathan: it wasn't appropriate in the context of their relationship].

I was taught many things from my teachers beyond martial arts. All of them demonstrated the importance of choosing a good lifestyle. Also, they all kept practising every day, even when they were very old. They did what they did with passion. They embodied what they believed in, socially and philosophically, and would teach me lessons and stories about these beliefs. They demonstrated for me a very good image of what martial arts are. It was in how they stood, sat, talked, moved — that was the traditional practice.

So you are suggesting it is very important to understand and learn not only how the master does the martial arts, but also how he handles himself in everyday life?

Yes, yes.

Do you keep this tradition with your students? Do you have students that hang around with you and see how you do things in everyday life?

I mostly learned from family members. When my grandfather taught me, it was a very gradual process. He wouldn't be as rough and tough as other teachers. So when I teach my students, I combine the two approaches. Most of the time I'd treat them like how my grandfather treated and taught me — I'll take it easy on them. At the same time, I'd put an emphasis on teaching them how to be serious and honest; how to do what they're doing with passion, and avoid diluting the art. But they don't have to make this their way of doing things outside of martial arts. The day that they decide they don't like it anymore, they can stop. I want my student to learn as much in great details as possible, to learn as much as

they can. Too many people keep secrets. I don't want to keep any secrets. Another important thing is for the students to learn how to use what they know from martial arts to deal with difficult situations in their lives. I, for example, had to deal with moving to a new country and surviving a new environment. I believe that martial arts have helped me a lot with that. So I hope that these kinds of things can be carried on to the next generation.

You grew up in Tianjin. This city housed countless famous masters of the martial arts. Tell us about growing up in such a city where martial arts had probably been a part of your daily life. My grand-teacher Zhou lives in Tianjin, and I know that even in modern times, when you go to the parks you can see many martial artists. I think people in the West often have a hard time understanding or visualising such a childhood. Say in the US, people grow up playing baseball or basketball, but in Tianjin many kids grew up playing martial arts...

Even up until the time I was a teenager, martial arts were indeed very popular. The district I lived in, He Dong (河东, East-River district), was very famous for its Xing Yi, and many people there practised martial arts. Like other cultures have their jazz festivals, music festivals and such, in the summertime in Tianjin in our district, we had a martial arts festival in the evenings, for three-to-four months. We didn't have air conditioning; we barely had fans. So people didn't want to stay inside [their homes], and got out to practise their martial arts, opera, etc. This was also a way to make life easier and more entertaining. People practised martial arts as their pastime, and it was a social thing. Older people practised as well. They didn't do it to become some

legend, a historian, or for some blog or magazine. It was a very interesting aspect in Chinese culture.

I've seen videos from the early 20th century, of Chinese martial artists practising their arts publicly in US neighbourhoods and festivals. They seemed to have imported this cultural heritage from China and to have kept it alive at that time. Nowadays you don't see these things anymore, as Chinese immigrants and families have become a more integral part of American culture...

Globalisation! (Yang laughs with a tint of sadness) People got no life. I can't tell whether this is good or bad... Chinese culture is very special. It used to be that the Chinese would get into a different culture, but eventually their original Chinese culture would stand out*. Times are different now. Chinese culture is now leaning towards Western culture, modern culture. Many people in China are aware of this. They try to modify their ways accordingly. For example, when you teach martial arts nowadays, you have to use modern ways to teach them. Still, martial arts are a cultural phenomenon. They cannot survive without the cultural context.

[Jonathan: This brings to mind the various peoples who conquered parts of China throughout history, and held it for several decades or more. A strange thing happened to these nations. While being the conquerors, these peoples, such as the Manchurians and Mongols, adopted much of the native Han Chinese culture, often replacing their own cultural practices and even their writing systems with their Han Chinese equivalents. Also notable are the Japanese and other nations, who adopted large parts of the Chinese writing system, and the Okinawans, whose martial arts were directly affected by Chinese martial arts. So



Yang training at his *guan* (school) in Montreal, Canada

I believe master Yang was speaking of the unique cultural impact that the Han Chinese culture had on whichever culture it came in contact with, in the relatively more distant past. In political science, this innate cultural technique is called 'soft power' — the power a nation can employ in non-violent means, unrelated to warfare, to expand its influence and promote its goals.]

Many people study martial arts without learning the cultural context. Would you argue that it is important to, for example, study Chinese in order to fully understand Chinese martial arts?

Yes, I think so. I do encourage it. Just as when studying or teaching [where I live] you have to study English — to make yourself understandable, and understand the other culture deeply. People who learn Chinese gongfu should at least know a little bit [of Chinese]. What is Chinese

language? What does it mean? Its social meanings, its values.

For instance, in Chinese we say: "Gāng róu xiāng jì" (刚柔相济) — literally, 'Hard and soft coexist.' This is a cultural thing. If you don't understand the cultural context, you may not understand this, and you may ask: 'How can you do the hard and soft together?' It wouldn't make sense. In China, that kind of hard (gāng) doesn't mean very hard, stiff, rigid. It means more like 'strong'. Róu is not exactly 'soft', but more like 'flexible'. So the proverb actually means strong, but still flexible; flexible, and still soft inside. If you cannot understand this context, you can never reach this level [with your body]. So this is just one example.

Another example is with *wu de* — martial morals. Many people take rituals as martial morals. A salutation is just a ritual! A martial moral is one's belief! To know how to handle others, to treat other people fairly, and to be honest in your

teaching, to know what you know and don't know, to not exaggerate what you know... these are the basic principles. To not injure others, to let people know you're good without harming them... It's not about how you stand, or the uniform you wear. It's about the right context of Chinese culture.

Can you tell us about other interesting martial arts teachers you've met in Tianjin?

There were the Huo family. Among them was Huo Wenzhong (霍文忠). His grandfather was the bodyguard of the last Chinese emperor. He started teaching martial arts using Western methodologies within the Chinese military police.

There was Ma Jie (马杰). He learned from Meng Xiaofeng (孟晓峰), who was famous for his Wudang swordplay. Later on, he went to the Wudang Mountains and re-taught the monks there the Wudang swordplay, which they have since lost.

There was Zhao Daoxin [赵道新; who was a Xing Yi practitioner]. He participated in the famous 1929 all-China fighting competition in Nanjing [Jonathan: It's a very famous event. It barely had any rules, and no gloves. The competition was stopped when 13 competitors remained after too many people got seriously injured, and some even died. The organisers were concerned that the remaining 13 would literally kill each other off.] Zhao Daoxin had many new ideas on how to train students in modern times. He advocated that one shouldn't just practise the forms in the traditional manner, and change them in accordance to modern times and scenarios. He made comparisons between what he considered 'good' and 'bad' ways to train.

Can you tell us a bit about your gongfu grand-teacher, Zhang Zhaodong?

To my grandfather, Zhang Zhaodong was a hero. He respected him a lot, and

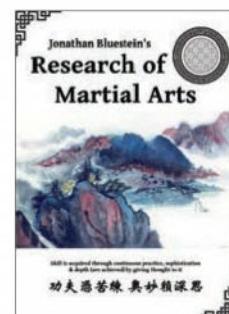


Yang at home in Montreal

often said he was very strong, and knew how to teach. In 'knowing how to teach', my grandfather meant that Zhang knew how to suit the teachings to the qualities and capabilities of each student. He knew how to promote the martial arts. He knew how to combine bagua and Xing Yi together to make a new style. And he knew how to combine a hard force together with a subtle force.

Many people thought these masters only practised [martial arts], and didn't take care of [financial] business. It's not true. All the good masters took care of their business very seriously. Otherwise, they wouldn't have been so famous. They knew how to promote themselves and their students. They knew how to use the students to their advantage. For example, Zhang Zhaodong had

a student by the name of Jiang Rongqiao (姜容樵). Jiang did not practise as well and was not as good as Zhang's other students. He wasn't the best, he reached an ordinary level, but Jiang was a very good author. So Zhang worked with Jiang, and asked Jiang to write for him. This was a smart move. Financially, Zhang also did very well. He had a student whose name was Qiu Zhihe (裘稚和), who gave him a lot of money for his teachings. Zhang also knew how to connect himself with celebrities, rich people, businessmen and politicians. Another person who knew (how to do) this very well was Xue Dian. When Xue Dian wrote his book, the former president of China even wrote some calligraphy for him! These people knew how to do business.



Shifu Jonathan Bluestein (LL.B) is a martial arts teacher and author hailing from Israel. He is the founder of the Tianjin Martial Arts Academy, where he teaches the traditional Chinese martial arts of Xing Yi Quan and Pigua Zhang. More details of his book, Research of Martial Arts, as well as 72 free sample pages from it, can be found at www.researchofmartialarts.com

For more on Master Yang, see his website internalstyle.com ■



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THE BATTLE UPSTAIRS

Martial arts and the psychology of mental toughness

It's generally accepted that martial arts training 'makes us better' both physically and mentally – better able to defend ourselves, to perform athletic tasks, to adapt, to strategise and, most importantly, to cope with adversity. But what do the psychological sciences make of this assumption? And are some arts better than others for the purpose of strengthening the mind and maintaining mental health? Former military psychologist and 'resilience training' specialist Melissa Harries has the answers.

STORY BY MELISSA HARRIES

One of the most common questions I am asked as a psychologist is, 'What makes you resilient?' Resilience is a hot topic at the moment, with everyone from school teachers to CEOs interested in helping their community to be mentally tough.

Resilience is most commonly defined as the ability to bounce back from adversity. In order to be resilient, there are two necessary conditions: adversity and coping with adversity. To be resilient you need to suffer, and learn how to cope with that suffering. So, while part of resilience is enduring the challenges that life throws at us, the other part is developing coping strategies, skills and

resources that enable us to fight through when the going gets tough.

Physical fitness has long been considered a critical component of mental health. In fact, the power of exercise is so strong that researchers have shown that it's as effective as antidepressants at treating depression. In the last 20 years, martial arts has received special attention from psychological scientists who have investigated the impact of martial arts on a range of mental health aspects including self-confidence, aggression, depression, anxiety and classroom conduct. Research has also explored how martial arts participation can improve wellbeing in different ways for youths,

adults and the elderly, and the results are surprising.

I CAN, IF I BELIEVE I CAN

Youth martial arts programs often claim to build self-esteem and self-confidence in their participants. This seems like a reasonable claim, as students are required to



demonstrate discipline and self-control in order to master new skills. Certainly, there is strong support from social scientists that participation in martial arts improves personality traits like self-esteem and confidence; however, not all martial arts programs are created equal.

Firstly, better results are achieved when the instructional style is traditional as opposed to modern. Traditional training methods include using meditative or mindful awareness, encouraging self-control and respect, and emphasising kata training, while modern instruction tends to focus only on teaching the physical aspects.

Traditional instruction assists children and youths to develop mental coping skills known as self-regulation. Individuals who self-regulate their emotions are able to manage the impact of unhelpful thoughts and feelings on their behaviour. This allows students to focus on the task at hand in spite of how they feel, a key component of resilience.

This skill is useful in many

contexts. The way you manage nervousness about an upcoming bout with a strong opponent is similar to paying attention in class when it's sunny outside. The ability to let go of your thinking and focus on a specific task predicts success in the classroom, in sporting competitions and, later in life, success at work.

Secondly, competition counts. The performance of participants in competition seems to improve self-esteem, self-confidence and mood. Participants who are successful, in particular, get the most benefit. Everyone loves a win but there is also benefit to those who compete and lose.

Competition, win or lose, is a challenge that requires the mobilisation of coping skills to manage. Consequently, regular participation in contests can improve resilience regardless of the outcome.

Like any other health strategy, moderation is key. An over-focus on competing and defining self-worth by wins and losses is likely to undo any positive effects that may be gained.

Thirdly, experience makes a difference. Though somewhat

“Several styles of martial arts have been rigorously tested for their ability to improve mental health”

related to competitiveness, better results have been found for advanced versus beginner students. As students develop a sense of mastery, confidence improves. This has been found to gradually increase over time (months and years) and much of the research before the mid-1990s established this as fact. Charles Richman and H Rehberg, as early as 1986, demonstrated that self-esteem could be improved with two months of training, while others found that longer was necessary (several years).

Sometimes the benefits can be seen immediately. When classes are instructed as self-contained and stand-alone

lessons, self-confidence also improves within the session, if only for a few days after. For example, Torunn Bodin and Egil Martinsen, mental health clinicians in Norway, compared the impact of riding a stationary bike to martial arts lessons with initially low though increasing self-efficacy (the belief that you can complete a task). Participants were required to learn three specific moves that had increasing difficulty versus sitting on a spin bike for 45 minutes. Participants reported a higher level of confidence during and immediately after the martial arts sessions; however, these changes were not sustained several days later.

“

Individuals who self-regulate their emotions are able to manage the impact of unhelpful thoughts and feelings on their behaviour.

”



The ‘moving meditation’ of tai chi has proven positive for mental health

CHARLIE SURIANO

BUT DO FIGHT SPORTS LEAD TO STREET FIGHTS?

Close attention has been paid to understanding whether participating in martial arts causes problems. Do martial artists demonstrate more aggression or hostility? Jikkemien Vertonghen and Marc Theeboom from Vrije University, Brussels, conducted a review of 16 individual studies that investigated the relationship between aggression and martial arts. A sum total of 2,500 individuals participated and Vertonghen and Theeboom concluded that youth who participate in martial arts demonstrate lower levels of aggression and hostility, and more sociable attitudes towards violence. There are a couple of exceptions to this, where participation has been related to increases in aggression; however, some believe that this is not reflective of the sport, but rather of the socioeconomic status from which participants come. This may also reflect a broader culture of being excessively macho, which some gyms and training establishments foster.

Earlier this year, Vertonghen and Theeboom, along with Korean taekwondo expert Willy Pieter, also considered the difference between

‘hard’ martial arts like kickboxing, which are characterised by full contact, and ‘soft’ martial arts like aikido, which are characterised by creating harmony between body and mind. Interestingly, no consistent relationship has been found between the type of martial art practised and incidences of aggression.

While the media may point to combat sports as a contributing factor to public antisocial behaviour (king hitting, for instance), this is just not supported by scientific research.

MARTIAL ARTS & ADULT MENTAL HEALTH

Anxiety and depression are the most common mental disorders in Australia, with one in five adults in the last 12 months experiencing these illnesses. Not only have psychologists recognised the therapeutic benefits of martial arts, but they also recognise the parallels between the goals and strategies of martial arts and psychotherapy. Several styles of martial arts have been rigorously tested for their ability to improve mental health [e.g. by Nebojsa Toskovic from Emory University], with taekwondo and tai chi receiving individual attention as particularly useful methods of improving mood.

Tai chi and many forms of taekwondo specifically integrate ‘mindfulness’ meditation and exercise, combining two powerful forms of mental health treatment. Mindfulness is increasingly becoming a mainstream form of therapy, mostly appropriated from Eastern philosophies.

Mindfulness is the ability to pay attention, on purpose and without judgment to one’s experiences, whether they be positive or negative. It’s also the ability to not fuse with your thoughts but to be aware of your thinking while still maintaining contact with the present moment.

The ability to maintain present-moment awareness is cultivated in both psychotherapy and martial arts, but martial arts also provide a physical platform to learn these skills. Meditation can be a tough sell with some clients who see the strategy as too ‘new-age hippy’ to learn, but these clients can be channelled into more practical methods of instruction as an alternative, though still an adjunct to counselling.

When taekwondo is delivered in self-contained lessons that are delivered as though a ‘one off’, it can reduce symptoms of depression and

anxiety immediately. These effects don't last long (two or three days), but the results are much stronger than when participants do a physical activity that doesn't require learning a new skill (again like riding a stationary bike).

One of the mechanisms that are thought to underpin the power of martial arts is the sense of mastery and self-efficacy, or belief that one can complete a task. This can be achieved immediately, although it needs to be repeated regularly for long-term benefits.

This illustrates one of the principles required for physical exercise to effectively treat depression — it must be regular. As a general rule of thumb, three times per week every week for 12 weeks is a minimum. Moderate exercise conducted at this ratio is as effective as antidepressants at treating depression, with a much lower relapse rate than taking medication. This also helps to explain why students of martial arts who are advanced in their discipline show better outcomes than newbies.

In addition to learning practical applications of mindfulness, tai chi is particularly useful for older adults as an adjunct to the treatment of depression. The use of diaphragmatic and controlled breathing has

Competition, win or lose, develops mental traits that come in handy for life



parallels to therapy, although the labels may differ.

Another group that has gained significant benefit from martial arts are victims of physical and sexual assault who undergo self-defence training. While not strictly a martial art, (typically) women are trained in defensive skills in how to resist if faced with a physical threat. Training is of short duration (usually from two to 16 weeks) and participants generally show

quick improvements in their assertiveness and self-esteem, as well as reducing anxiety and fear. These effects are not permanent, lasting up to six months, which again speaks to the importance of continued participation regardless of the style of martial art.

DOES MARTIAL ARTS EQUAL RESILIENCE?

No one thing will make a person resilient, as it is a combination of genetics, life

experience, coping skills and current physical and social resources. Resilient people, however, have confidence in their ability to cope as well as the ability to manage their emotions while still pursuing their (difficult) goals. These are attributes that psychological scientists have found the martial arts develop, while also assisting to reduce depression and anxiety. The key is to be consistent with your training. To use martial arts to improve mood, make it regular and choose instruction styles that make a point of fostering mind/body awareness. And like any skill, mental resilience takes practice to be perfect, so give it the time and effort it deserves.

Melissa Harries is the principal psychologist of Mindset Abilities, a Sydney-based psychology practice. She has nine years' experience as a mental health practitioner, including working with soldiers in training and on deployment. She is an expert trainer in resilience and also provides treatment to individuals with mental disorders. ■

Taekwondo has been the subject of several studies into martial arts and the mind



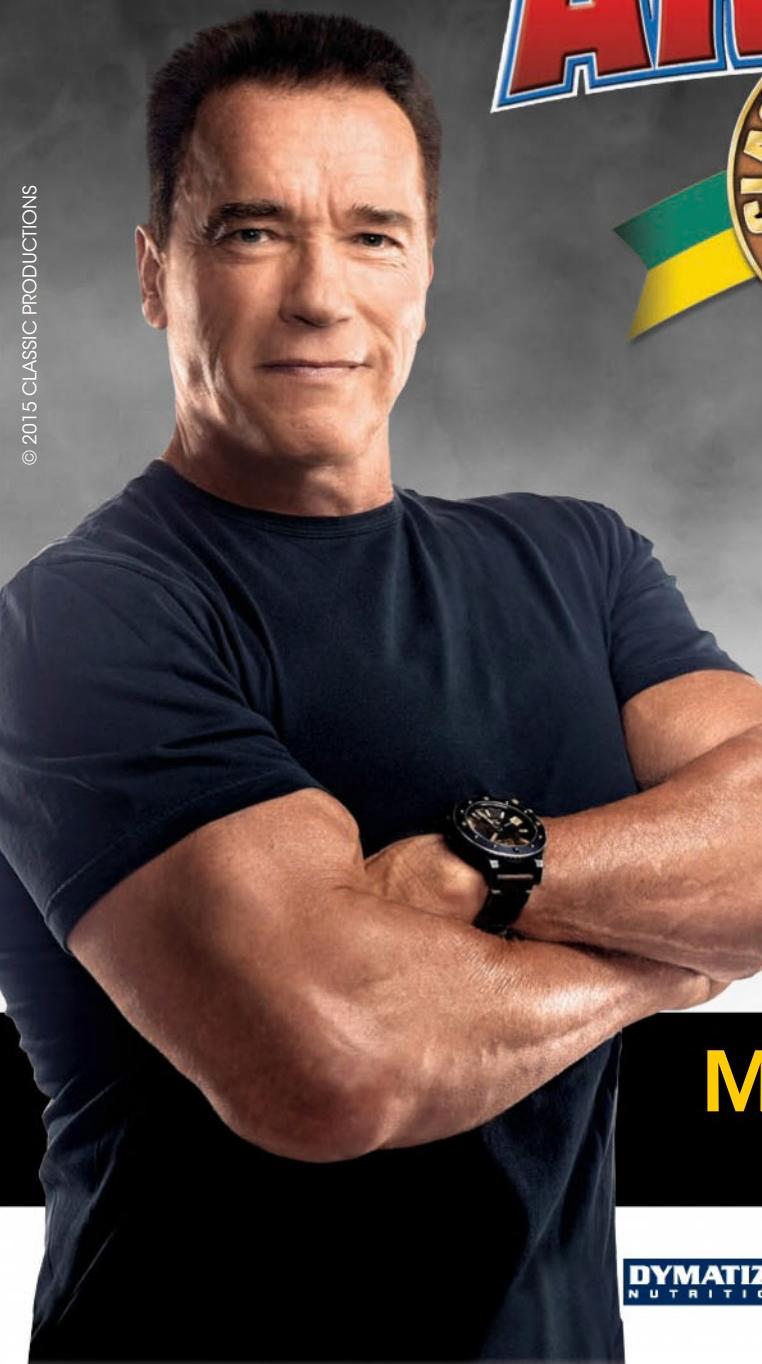
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TECHNIQUE WORKSHOP WITH THEODORE TSANIDIS



Defence against an axe-kick: Goju-Ryu Karate

THEODORE TSANIDIS

As a young man in the late 1960s, Theodore Tsanidis was very energetic and loved sports. After many years of training in all kinds, he decided to stick with karate, "as it had everything the human body needed to stay fit and healthy". Tsanidis ultimately joined the IKO Goju Ryu Karate group and after a few years of training he was fortunate enough to train with the head master of IKO Goju Ryu, SoShihan Gonnohyoue Yamamoto. SoShihan Yamamoto was so impressed with Tsanidis' karate skills that he endorsed him to open his own dojos. Now, after 40 years of training, Shihan Tsanidis holds an 8th Dan rank and has taught thousands of students the IKO's traditional Japanese budo karate with a focus on self-improvement, fulfilment and personal growth.

Q&A **Theodore, in your opinion and experience, what are the most important elements of self-defence?**

After years of drills, conditioning and training, when it comes to real-world life or death situations, there are a handful of elements that will determine what state you leave in.

Situational Alertness: Unfortunately, with constant media bombardment these days, more and more people are questioning their 'gut feeling'. But it's that intuition that triggers our receptors and alerts us that something is not right when we walk down a dark street or enter a lift with someone suspicious. You need to pay attention to those primal instincts and react accordingly.

Awareness of your surroundings: If it comes to the point that you need to defend yourself, ensure you are aware of your surroundings. Know your environment; look for an exit strategy; be aware of all your attackers and the angles they are coming from; and use any available weapons of opportunity to get yourself out of trouble.

Self-control: When defending yourself, control your emotions and adrenaline. Adrenaline affects people differently, but fear will always kick in, no matter how proficient a martial artist you are. You need to control and understand how this affects you and learn to channel it effectively.

Real-world situations are always messy and uncertain. Training in a discipline that implements reality-based scenarios in its curriculum will put you in a better position to come out of it. Chance favours the prepared body and mind.



As the attacker begins to open out his lead foot, indicating a kick off the rear leg, Tsanidis brings his hands up ready to defend...



...and pivots to the outside of the attacker as the kick is launched...



...then in one move, Tsanidis blocks the rising kick with one hand and delivers a punch to the attacker's ribs with the other...



...immediately followed by a strike to the trachea, using the same hand he used to block the kick.



Tsanidis then follows this up with a stomp through the back of the attacker's knee, taking him off balance while Tsanidis continues to grab the attacker around the neck.



Continuing to move behind the attacker, he uses both hands under the chin of the attacker to yank him to the ground...



...then Tsanidis delivers a final hammer-punch to the side of the attacker's head.

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TECHNIQUE WORKSHOP WITH NICHOLAS CONDUIT



Defence against an axe-kick: Hapkido

IMAGES BY ELEANOR CONDUIT – WWW.ELEANORCONDUIT.COM

NICHOLAS CONDUIT

Master Nicholas Conduit discovered hapkido in 1999 after years of studying various martial arts, including kickboxing, karate and taekwondo. In 2009, he travelled to South Korea for rigorous training with Grandmaster Young Sil Chang and as a result began corresponding with Grandmaster Gottfried Roser, founder of the International Hapkkyoosool Federation. In early 2010, Conduit established the Conduit Hapkido Centre in south-west Melbourne and soon after was invited to the US to co-instruct an international seminar with Grandmaster Roser. It was during this time that Conduit was awarded his master's rank and International Instructor's Certificate. In 2013, Conduit founded the TRI Martial Arts Friendship Seminar series, which brings together three different martial arts styles in a full-day open seminar, and later that year Grandmaster Roser named Conduit as the president of the International Hapkkyoosool Federation, Australian Headquarters.

"I have been working in the security industry and with the Department of Justice for 12 years and have found that my hapkido training has been an invaluable tool in maintaining my safety when faced with serious physical threats," says Conduit.

Q&A Nicholas, in your experience, what are the most important elements of self-defence?

I believe the most important element of self-defence is having a thorough understanding of the art you're training in. Why do the techniques work, how do they work and what will they do to your attacker? Understanding the pressure that you will encounter in a self-defence situation will determine how you react to the situation. In hapkido we regularly pressure-test our students so that they learn how to deal with the psychological and physiological stresses that we are faced with as a defender.

Another vital element of self-defence is harmony. Learning to train for the intended purpose that is the art of hapkido, you must train to defend yourself and so must practise to effectively harmonise with the intention of your attacker. When you are faced with a violent attack, you must be able to match their aggressive intention with your defensive intention. Learning this skill takes time and understanding, and supports the need for pressure-testing students so that they learn how to harmonise their defence with the attack they are faced with. A third element is having the right attitude to your self-defence. This is important as it will keep you on a true path of growth, understanding, discipline and honour. Hapkido is a self-defence art and so we train to develop embedded understanding of the techniques, so they will then become second nature and harmony will follow without forced thinking.



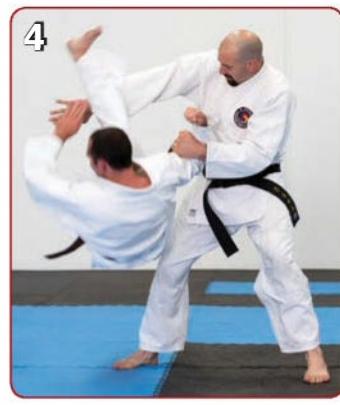
As his opponent comes in, Master Conduit (right) assumes a 'closed stance' with left foot forward, maintaining good posture and lowering his centre.



As the attacker steps in and launches his leg up, Conduit slides his left foot forward roughly 45 degrees off the line of attack, harmonising with the speed of the attacker, and steps in...



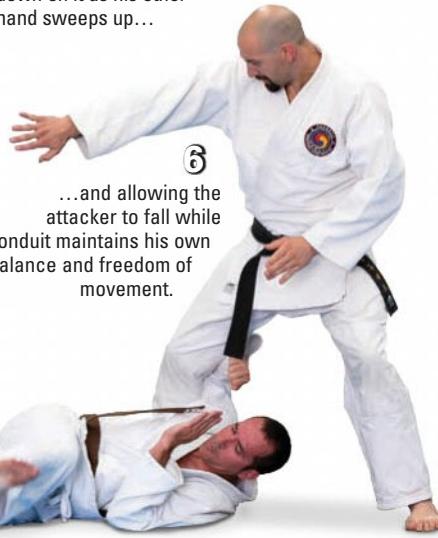
...to plant his foot behind the attacker's while scooping his right arm under the kicking leg and directing his energy up in a circular motion behind his foe's left ear.



At the same time Conduit is controlling his foe's near arm at the elbow to neutralise a possible secondary attack, and, in one circular motion, he pulls down on it as his other hand sweeps up...



...and he moves his hips in the same direction, extending his 'ki centre' beyond his opponent...

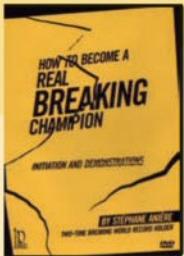


6

...and allowing the attacker to fall while Conduit maintains his own balance and freedom of movement.

NOTE: All movements must be conducted in a continuous, flowing manner, harmonising your body movement with your attacker's. All photographs have been taken in real time and have not been slowed or staged.

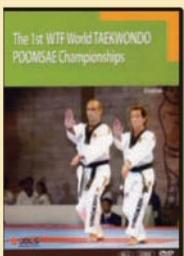
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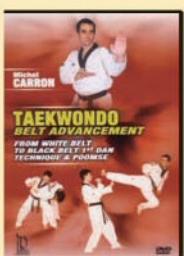
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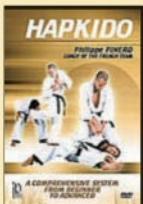
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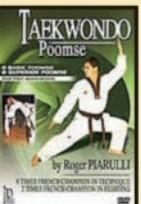
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TECHNIQUE WORKSHOP WITH PHON MARTDEE



Defence against an axe-kick: Muay Thai

PHON MARTDEE

Phon Martdee has been training fighters for 43 years and has trained more than 30 muay Thai champions, and has promoted over 60 events. He was born in Saraburi (near the ancient Thai capital Ayutthaya, about 80 km north of Bangkok) and began learning the basics of muay Thai at eight years old from his uncle, a former champion.

"Whenever there was a festival in our province, and they advertised for locals to compete, I would rush to weigh in and put myself forward to compete," says Martdee. Throughout college, studying a BA in Phys. Ed, he competed in muay Thai and was also chosen to represent Thailand in the Under-21s national soccer team. From then on he worked in Bangkok for six years as a physical education teacher.

Martdee moved to Perth, Western Australia in 1985 and in 1988 the Sporting Authority of Thailand suggested he open an authentic muay Thai school, to advance the sport of Thai boxing Down Under.

Since opening his first school in 1989, Martdee has been promoting muay Thai and its culture. He has promoted fight shows at Conrad Jupiters Casino (Gold Coast), Burwood Dome and Challenge Stadium, and the Perth series WBC Muay Thai Battle Colossal.

(Pictured with Phon is Pamorn Martdee, an Australian welterweight champion and silver medallist at the Muay Thai World Championships.)

Q&A Phon, in your opinion and experience, what are the most important elements of self-defence?

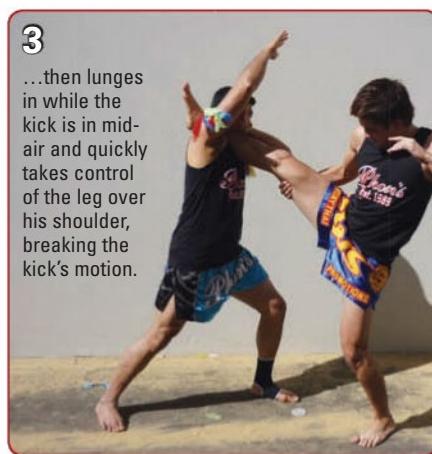
I think confidence goes a long way to keeping you safe in a self-defence situation — just like how it helps you in the ring. When you exude confidence, you will less likely be targeted by attackers on the streets. Another important element is knowing the differences between the sporting side of combat and the self-defence aspect. I've trained many fighters who have excelled in the ring, but I make sure I stress the importance of knowing the right techniques to use on the street. I feel martial artists can get into a lot of trouble on the street if they are too focused on the sport side. There are no rules or regulations keeping you safe on the street, so you have to prepare accordingly.



Martdee stands ready with his chin low and guard high as the attacker approaches.



Martdee leans back to evade the attacker's head-hunting right axe-kick...



...then lunges in while the kick is in mid-air and quickly takes control of the leg over his shoulder, breaking the kick's motion.



Martdee secures the attacker's right arm and, with the leg still under control, drives a knee-strike into the groin...



...then steps in with a low kick to the attacker's supporting leg...



...and lifts the attacker's kicking leg high and forwards to throw him off balance.

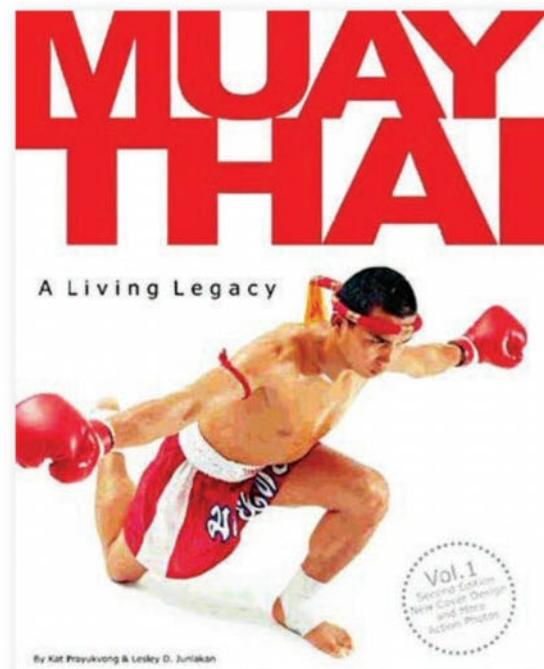


Martdee comes through with a head-kick to finish as the attacker goes down...



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MMA 101

Pad Work for Mixed Martial Arts

WITH DENIS KELLY AND PHIL LAI

In this technique we will look at a useful way to incorporate boxing or muay Thai pad work specifically for MMA. It is common for trainers who come from a striking background to train their fighters in the traditional boxing or muay Thai format, neglecting to take into account

the differences and variety of attacks and defences that can occur in an MMA match. This sequence gives an example of some of the ways that traditional pad work can be combined with grappling techniques to make it more useful and suitable for Mixed Martial Arts.



1

Pad holder (Lai) tries to close the distance and get into clinch range for a takedown.



2

Fighter (Kelly) gets a single neck-tie grip with his left hand while punching with his right into the right pad.



3

Kelly maintains the neck-tie grip while delivering a right uppercut onto the right pad.



4

He then pummels in for a right under-hook while stepping forward with his right foot...



5

... then proceeds to push Lai back to the fence and pins him in place with his knee and head position.



6

Kelly then brings his left hand to the top of the Lai's head and pushes down while delivering knee strikes with the left knee.



7

Kelly then reaches for Lai's right ankle with his left hand to complete an ankle-pick takedown.



8

Finally, Kelly kneels across Lai's right leg, keeping him pinned while continuing to punch with his left hand. ■

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DRILL IT WITH RICARDO VARGAS



Intercepting Like Lee

This Wing Chun-inspired Jeet Kune Do flow drill used by Bruce Lee encourages interception and simultaneous counter-striking using subtle movement.

THE EXPERT

Colombian-born Sifu Ricardo Vargas is a second-generation student of Bruce Lee's Jeet Kune Do and holds full instructor rank in the art. Sifu Vargas was personally trained and certified as a professional instructor by two of Bruce Lee's original JKD students, Grandmaster Richard S Bustillo and the late Sifu Jerry Poteet. Sifu Vargas was also certified in the Golden Dragon Self-defense System by its founder, Grandmaster Sebastian Nazario. In 2013, Sifu Vargas was awarded with the United States Martial Arts Hall of Fame 'Outstanding Martial Artist' award under the International Martial Arts Council of America. He also holds a bachelor degree in philosophy and a masters degree in theology, and has significant experience working in education at university levels as a lecturer and a director of different leadership programs for students. Sifu Vargas has been running his own club in Adelaide, South Australia, for the last three years.

THE DRILL

To introduce this trapping drill, I have to base my approach to Bruce Lee's art on the explanation about the origins of Jeet Kune Do by the late Sifu Ted Wong: "Although Bruce Lee disliked the word style for describing Jeet Kune Do, there was a distinctive character to his training way which was unlike any other martial art. In order to preserve this art,

Jeet Kune Do has to become somewhat of a style in the sense of being standardised and systematised, because unless some kind of structure is imposed on it, it will not survive in its original forms. Bruce did not have any plans on how to preserve Jeet Kune Do, so it is the responsibility of his elder students to offer the present and the future generations the experience of the original training, formulas, principles and progressions of Jeet Kune Do. A teacher should provide the foundation for the student, then offer his own interpretation and assist the student to find his own best way."

It is not my intention to teach anything as a pattern, but to provide a training experience for you to try out and develop some fundamentals of the Jeet Kune Do trapping method.

You can practise this drill in a very contact-oriented way using striking pads, gloves, body armour, head and mouth gear for full-contact sparring.

Bruce Lee found that staying outside the opponent's effective range eliminated the threat of being hit, yet he could still hit the opponent. This drill is all about that principle, and begins with slipping your partner's straight punch to the head while simultaneously striking his ribs on the lower line.

You then follow with a combination, redirecting then trapping, and each time punching simultaneously with the opposite hand. The last strike of the combo — the

straight right — sees your partner begin the same sequence by parrying your fist and counter-striking low.

You can practise this drill from the left guard in order to develop attacking and defensive abilities on both sides. You can focus the practice on the speed to do the transition from one hand position to the other, and you can also focus on the power development of both attacks and defence structure. Remember Bruce Lee's philosophy of "using no-way as way and having no-limitation as limitation" — in this case, you can practise the drill with one or both knees on the floor or

evade and to intercept, as well as teaching you to attack and defend simultaneously. This drill also assists in teaching us to use contact (feeling) in combination with vision to accurately judge distance in order to respond effectively.

As a non-classical martial art, Jeet Kune Do is based on skill, not on how many techniques, arts or forms you know. The key question is how do we develop skills? The answer is by repetition, by practising the drills '10 thousand times'. The first stage of the skill development is the muscle memory — that spontaneous ability to react and respond without thinking. This is good at

Bruce Lee found that staying outside the opponent's effective range eliminated the threat of being hit, yet he could still hit the opponent.

sit down on the floor or chairs. One person can lie down on the floor facing the ceiling and the partner on top... There are unlimited possibilities to push not only your body but your mind and the borders of your comfort zone in order to achieve your goals.

THE RESULT

This drill teaches you to exercise the principle of staying outside the opponent's effective range while still being able to hit your opponent — a key skill of Bruce Lee's. It is also about learning just how little movement is needed to

the beginning, but not enough, because it carries a big risk: a significant lack of awareness. In modern management, intelligence is described as the ability to make the right decision and to take the right action in the least amount of time. This is the kind of ability you can develop at a physical level by practising drills such as this one. Of course, just as the skills drilled here can transfer to different situations and stages of combat, the principles also transfer to different dimensions of our lives. It is all about applying our martial art's way to our way of living.

JKD DRILL: EVADE & INTERCEPT

Daniel (left) and Ricardo (right) face each other in guard, right hands forward.



...and Ricardo slips slightly to his left (to the outside of Daniel), parrying with his rear hand as he returns fire with a low hit to the ribs...



Ricardo then slaps Daniel's right forearm with his left palm to create an opening for his right straight punch...

Daniel then continues raising his right forearm in contact with Ricardo's as he launches a left cross punch...



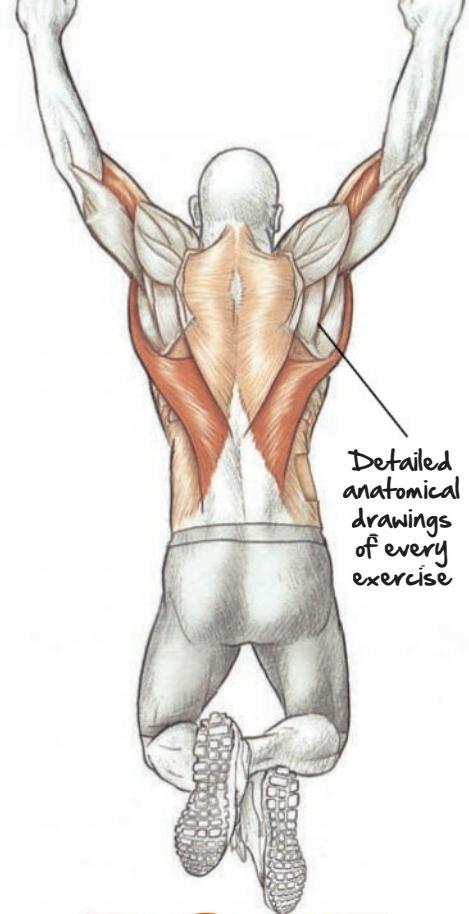
...and thus the practitioners swap roles, as Daniel responds by slipping slightly to his left (to the outside of Ricardo) and parrying with the left hand while simultaneously returning fire with a low punch to Ricardo's ribs.



...then he slaps Ricardo's right forearm with his left palm to make room for his right straight punch...



...and the practitioners swap roles again, as Ricardo blocks and counters. ■

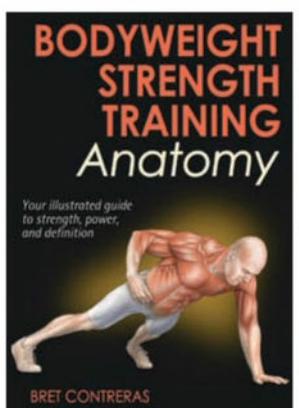


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THE BURN WITH MATT BEECROFT



Why Aren't I Stronger?

If you are training but not getting stronger, there are a few strength shortcuts you need to get there faster...

I've made a few mistakes and observed many made by others over the last 15 years working with athletes, martial artists and MMA practitioners at varying levels. Along the way I've picked up some universal truths about strength training that I think may help you if you're struggling or have hit a plateau.

When you first start strength training, it's easy to get amazing gains in the first year or two. You don't have to do a lot other than pick up some heavy stuff in whatever way possible, especially if you are young and bulletproof. But as your training experience grows and you get older, this most certainly changes. Most people inevitably taper off and plateau, and/or get injured. Some then quit, but the smart ones get a coach. If we all continued to get the same gains year in and year out like we did in the first year or two of strength training, we'd all be superhuman. The reality is that we don't. The real magic in strength training is seeing minor improvements year after year.

So, here are my strength shortcuts and reasons why you may not be getting stronger.

1 RECOVERY

Yep, it's number one. Why? Because it's the most underrated and sorely lacking facet in almost everyone's programming. Here is the simple formula: Stimulus + Recovery = Adaptation. Recovery is as important as the actual lifts or stimulus in the training program itself.

Recovery can come through various means, the top two

being sleep and nutrition. Basic? Yes. But 'basic' doesn't mean 'easy' — not by a long shot. These fundamentals have the most profound benefit and yet many people don't do them well at all.

Let's start with sleep. Getting adequate and restful sleep, and regular napping, can be one of the keys to recovering from training sessions. It sounds obvious but many of us float around on six or fewer hours sleep per night, and then wonder why we're cranky, have low energy and struggle with mental acuity. When we sleep we buffer cortisol levels (stress) and testosterone/growth hormones are released, along with a lot of other helpful hormones such as leptin, ghrelin and insulin, which help us recover. We need to be aiming for more sleep as a priority.

Now, if sleep is king, nutrition is queen. I see an awful lot of people spending ridiculous amounts on supplementation and the next magic potion, pill, powder or stimulant without nailing their basic nutritional needs first. Supplements are an addition to sound nutrition, not instead of. We won't address nutritional needs specifically for strength here, but your best bet is to speak to a dietician or nutritionist who has a sound background getting results with strength- and power-based athletes.

I can't stress the importance of getting these two very basic — but not easy — facets of your training correct.

Other recovery methods



Whatever your problem, more fancy exercise equipment is unlikely to be the solution...nor has it ever been

include keeping your day-to-day stress levels low, having 'de-load' or rest weeks, hot and cold contrast baths and showers, yoga and flexibility/mobility work, breathing practice, foam rolling and soft tissue work/massage, and physical therapies (e.g.

osteopathy) as necessary can all play a significant part in the body's recovery from the demands of a challenging training program. Being able to recover more efficiently and effectively allows us to train more often and at a higher intensity. This, then, is the key

to great strength. It's not how much you can do, it's how much you can recover from.

2 OVERTRAINING

The old adage 'more isn't better, better is better' comes to mind here. Chasing fatigue, exhaustion or soreness and training countless days on end without rest, if your goal is strength, is never the way to go. If you look at the way Olympic lifters, power athletes and gymnasts train, they chase performance, not fatigue. The end goal of a session should not be bragging rights as to how hard the session kicked your arse. If you have an incessant need to do 'cardio' and 'feel the burn', and think that doing high-rep, light-weight metabolic conditioning-style sessions or marathon sessions in the gym will get you strong, it won't. It will, however, get you weak and burnt out. Often, low reps, heavy weight, long rest periods and lots of sets are the key to getting strong. If this doesn't sound like what you are doing, you probably aren't training for strength.

One of the easiest ways to determine whether you are overtraining is measuring your resting heart rate first thing of a morning and seeing if it is elevated more than usual. If it is, you are either ill or overtraining and not recovering sufficiently from your training. Another way to determine whether you're overtraining is via the law of diminishing returns. While it may be overly simplistic to say the reason why your numbers aren't getting better is because you are overtraining, since there are so many other variables, I have found this is often the case, especially for those who are stubborn or obsessive with their training. They are often just doing too much. And yet good strength coaches are always trying to find ways to eliminate exercises rather than add more to a program, so it

ISTOCK



When fitness tools such as kettlebells become 'trendy', poor form spreads like wildfire thanks to underqualified trainers

allows the trainee to spend more time on their art or sport.

3 PROGRAMMING

Choose the right program. I see a lot of beginner lifters pick a complex and advanced program from off the internet or out of the latest muscle and fitness magazine, thinking it's for them. Yet the number of clients who have initially told me they are not a novice or beginner lifter because they have been lifting for a year or two — and yet have terrible technique, poor movement and mobility, average numbers and/or chronic injuries — is amazing. This often comes down to ego. You need to honestly assess yourself or, better still, have an experienced coach do that for you. Programs need to individualised and specific.

4 FORM

Form, alignment, mobility, movement. Form matters. Not mastering your form on your basic lifts shows you don't care enough to get them right and ensures you stay a novice lifter. Poor form not only leads to

reduced performance, it leads to injury. Using fancy exercises and loading protocols when you aren't ready for them is also a dead giveaway; the best beginners have their foundation down. (Note: you're unlikely to learn how to do Olympic lifts or kettlebell exercises properly from the average personal trainer — in fact, the industry is packed with underqualified trainers displaying dangerous form, so find someone who is legitimately certified in the type of training you're after.)

5 GOALS

Don't aim for conflicting goals concurrently. If you are training for a triathlon or marathon and want to do the Beast Tamer challenge (for men this is a pull-up, pistol and press with a 48-kg kettlebell; for women it's the Iron Maiden challenge, the same with a 24-kg bell) and get bigger at the same time, quite simply, it's not going to happen. Goals most certainly can vary and be cycled but many people have very unrealistic and conflicting goals and thus try a shotgun approach. By trying

to achieve everything at the same time, you won't actually achieve anything specifically at a high level. And variety for variety's sake? Sampling a little bit of this and that? As with the martial arts, often it's the mediocre who insist on freedom from structure and float from program to program and exercise to exercise without really applying themselves diligently to anything. In truth, there is plenty of freedom with structure and there is so much magic in the mundane. If you need constant entertainment or external validation then there are some underlying issues there you need to address. You must earn what you get, and you can't get anything if always changing programs or trying to overlap those that aren't designed to work together.

6 PATIENCE

Progress requires patience. Impatience at not achieving goals and a lack of consistency is a big issue I see with many practitioners. Many people don't pay due diligence to following progressions and

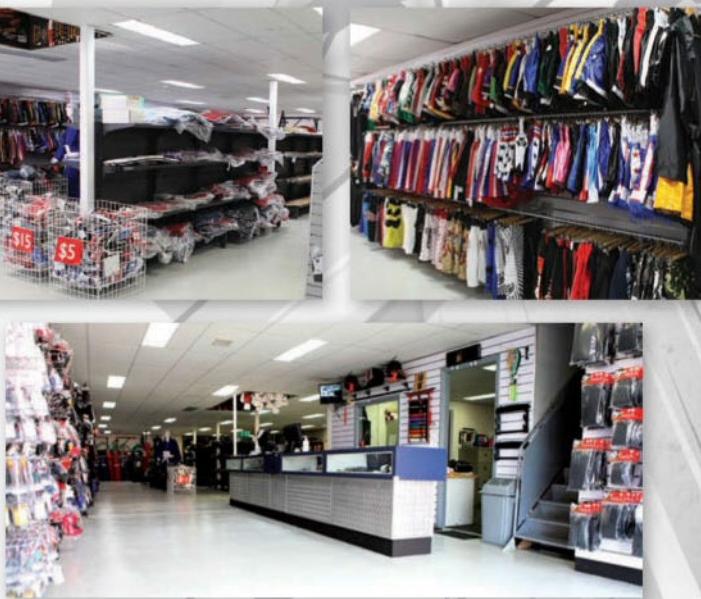


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THE BURN WITH MATT BEECROFT



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are not consistent with their training program for long enough to see the fruits of their labour. This often screams of self-entitlement and a desire for instant gratification. Less BS and more sweat is often the secret to success here. Not sticking to prescribed exercise progressions and moving along quickly may have you thinking that you are going well initially, but not putting those sessions and that training in the 'strength bank' for later will have you wishing that you had when your progress stalls.

7 DISCOMFORT

Naturally we gravitate to the things we are good at because it makes us feel good, but therein lies the challenge. We need to feel uncomfortable to grow and we need to work on our weaknesses to excel and to be well rounded. But this is inversely true for always doing

the stuff that you hate as well. While I admire this attitude of relentlessly attacking the things you don't enjoy, that make you uncomfortable or that you really suck at, there has to be balance. Always doing things you dislike sucks the fun out of things, and there must be a certain level of enjoyment to balance out the uncomfortable stuff and keep you coming back.

So there you have it. While we haven't addressed other important issues such as genetics, training implements, 'training age' versus chronological age, exercise prescription, neural loading and other factors that can hinder progress, if you address these seven points you will be smashing through your plateaus and making gains like never before.

Strength to you. ■

Matt Beecroft is an RKC Team Leader and Functional Movement System-certified strength coach with over 13 years experience as a trainer. He's an Expert Level krav maga instructor, nationally accredited boxing coach and national fitness presenter. He also coaches amateur and professional muay Thai fighters. He can be contacted via his website www.realitysdc.com.au

Master Wushu

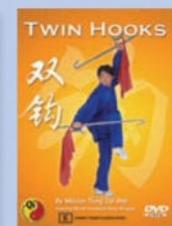
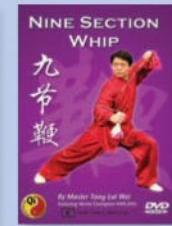
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STICK ~~TO YOUR GUNS~~ STICKS

Why sticks stack up for weaponry skill

When most martial artists think of stick-fighting, we think of the Filipino fighting arts or 'FMA'; and when we think of FMA, we think of sticks. The sticks became popular as a more palatable replacement for the Philippines' traditional long-bladed weapons, like the kris and kampilan, when FMA was brought to the West by the likes of Professor Remy Presas, but they have now become the essence of the art to many. Here, Kyoshi Marc Toussaint — Australia's second-highest ranking eskrimador in the Doce Pares style, 5th Degree Black-belt, who also has a 30-year history in freestyle karate and kickboxing with Bob Jones' Zen Do Kai/BJMA — gives an insight into stick-fighting training and real-world application.

STORY BY BEN STONE WITH INSTRUCTION BY MARC TOUSSAINT | IMAGES BY BOON MARK SOUPHANH

12 ANGLES



The first strike of Doce Pares' 12 Angles of Attack is an approximately horizontal, circular strike aimed at the side of the head/temples.



Strike two also takes a horizontal and circular trajectory, but with the stick slightly flatter and arm lower, and impacts the opponent's shoulder.



The third strike sees the hand turned over and the stick thrusted forward, so its end stabs into the abdomen or ribs.



The stick is then retracted and whipped around in a circular trajectory, travelling downward on the diagonal to strike the knee.



The stick is then brought back up as it is retracted and again the hand turns over to fire a straight, slightly downward thrust into the opponent's chest.



The stick is then whipped around on the right side into an overhead strike down the centre. The same six angles are then repeated on the backhand side.

Doce Pares eskrima theory breaks down the possible angles of attack into 12, like the points on a clock in relation to the body — with the strikes themselves mostly circular in trajectory, delivered forehand, backhand or from overhead, but also including linear thrusts and jabs. This numbering of strikes from one to 12 is uniform all around the world for the purpose of safety in training — as once they have learned the angles, students drilling won't misunderstand where an attack is coming from. And according to Kyoshi Marc Toussaint, Victorian state head instructor for both Bob Jones Corporation AEK (Arnis Eskrima Kali) and Doce Pares Australia, "It has also been shown that the students learn faster when they have a set of

numbers to follow."

The eskrima student's main focus is on learning to 'read' which of these angles an attack is coming from in order to defend it and exploit the corresponding opening that the strike may create. However, this is done with the possibility of multiple successive incoming attacks in, be they delivered with a weapon (stick, blade or an improvised weapon) or empty hands, so fast footwork is paramount to the student being able to move so they defend and attack simultaneously. When it comes to weapons, speed and agility are especially vital.

"Footwork is another core element that helps you move [with] a fluid momentum, allowing you to deal with any attack and to avoid the [opponent's] attack,"

Toussaint explains. He says this is the primary difference between eskrima and 'hard' styles of martial arts such as some Japanese karate systems, which focus on blocking hard and returning fire with powerful strikes that require very strong grounding of the feet in deeper stances than may be practical if a blade is in play.

"Doce Pares eskrima is a unique system that deals with fast-moving weapons of all types but mainly sticks and daggers, and for that reason it requires the practitioner to be 'soft,'" says Toussaint. "By remaining calm and relaxed when you move out of the line of attack and being fluid — using body mechanics — you give yourself the best



SCAN PAGE TO LEARN ABOUT DOCE PARES' ANGLES OF ATTACK

STICK VS STICK



As the attacker draws his stick back, indicating a swinging strike, Toussaint moves forward to the inside (right)...



...to get inside the weapon's arc and away from its power as he covers with a strike to the hand/arm...



...then immediately brings his free hand through to catch or cover as he cocks his stick back...



...to deliver a counter-strike to his opponent's exposed ribs. Maintaining control on the attacker's arm...



...Toussaint follows through with his strike and whips the stick around to come back with a strike to the head.



Still controlling his foe's hand, Toussaint follows through past the head and brings his elbow over...



...to use as leverage, striking into the attacker's wrist. He then turns back toward his foe, stick loaded...



...to strike the attacker across the back while turning his foe's elbow upward to pressure the shoulder...



...and effect a disarm with the follow-through (if the attacker has not already relinquished his weapon).



Continuing his motion, Toussaint then brings his stick back across the side of his opponent's neck...



...and captures the other end of it using the inside of his left elbow. Pulling the attacker in close...



...Toussaint then cranks his foe's head sideways to close off his left carotid artery against the stick.

position to take control of the attacker and/or move the attacker to a better position for you to control them and disarm them."

Doce Pares is akin to most Filipino fighting systems but different from most other Eastern fighting arts in that it teaches one way to use all weapons, including the limbs, rather than one method for sticks, another for blades and a third for the fists and arms — "The only thing that changes is the distance or position to the person you are defending against," Toussaint explains. And while the stick is generally seen as a long-range weapon, in Doce Pares practice it's also used at medium and close range, with the art featuring

more than 200 lock variations to effect control up close.

The Melbourne-based but widely travelled eskrimador explains that when beginning Doce Pares eskrima, the student starts working with a single stick, then moves to double-stick work later. Toussaint's school, All Active Martial Arts, in Epping, Victoria, follows the same syllabus as all Doce Pares schools: seven different types of strikes are taught from the beginning, including slash, thrust, snap and butt (the stick's end) striking using fanning, curving and circular motions, both forehand and backhand.

"When the student has an understanding of how the weapons work and how they may be attacked with a weapon,

it is easy to teach the students how to defend against each type of weapon combination through blocking or parrying the weapon," says Toussaint. The theory is that to be able to defend against a weapon, we must first know how to use it. The main weapon Doce Pares practitioners start training with is a bamboo 30-cm-long stick called a baton. With this they must also learn Doce Pares' unique method of 'twirling' the stick so if the attacker is able to block the student's attack, they are able to move their weapon around the blocking arm and still hit the target — the same principle applied when training with a dagger.

Doce Pares eskrima always works both arms for different

functions simultaneously — thus also working both sides of the brain together. "This ability is the same as if you played the piano: the left hand and the right hand play together but are doing their own thing. So too in Doce Pares eskrima, our hands move at the same time but are independent of each other," Toussaint explains. "So the non-weapon hand or the checking hand plays a big part of this system. Hitting or cutting with speed, one must have a very good defence and this system has it. Defence is worked at the same time or just in front of the hitting side."

With Doce Pares eskrima being a relatively technical weapons system, experience in an empty-hand martial art



SCAN PAGE
TO SEE VIDEO
INSTRUCTION
OF THIS
TECHNIQUE

beforehand will help with some of the fundamentals such as good balance and body control. However, Toussaint, who has been training since 1982 and is today ranked 6th Dan in Zen Do Kai freestyle karate and 4th Degree trainer with the World Kickboxing Association, does not consider empty-hand combat training a prerequisite for stick fighting. "The truth is, having an open mind with no expectations or beliefs makes learning any weapon system easy; most people who have no martial art study beforehand do very well in this system," he reasons. "When trying Doce Pares eskrima for the first time, my tip is to not over-try to understand how to do the techniques but to just let it happen. It is definitely a martial arts system that is mastered over many years of training."

MODES OF TRAINING

Doce Pares eskrima employs a vast number of training drills to help develop skill from basic to master level. Of these, it starts with the *abecedario*, known as

the 'ABC' of the art. In this drill, one person delivers a strike (from the one-to-12 number system mentioned earlier) to their training partner, who defends against the attack and counter-strikes with up to four strikes and at the same time controls the attacker's weapon and/or arm. If the attacker strikes high (face or head), the defender will go low with a counter-strike, then high and back to a low strike. So the core element for this drill is to be able to counter-attack from any angle and to attack the attacker's strike before they complete it. Importantly, it also teaches not to wait for the attacker to stop and/or withdraw their weapon before you enter.

A further drill that develops speed is *tapi-tapi*. This works on one person holding out a weapon like a stick, so the other person can work on their checking hand and weapon hand working together to keep control of the attacker's weapon arm. "We start with a four-count [drill] and as the student gets better, you end up

with over 34 counts, and then to free-flow *tapi-tapi*, hitting sticks — single and double," explains Toussaint. Eskrimadors then advance to doing drills with stick and dagger (known as *espada y daga*) as well as the use of a staff and empty-hand or *mano-mano* drills, and these against any weapons (sticks, dagger, stick and dagger, etc.). "All the drills can be used with or without a weapon in hand and this helps, having the same way of doing things," he says. With principles in place to guide universal basic movements and footwork, the nature of the weapon, short or long, has little bearing on the response other than the obvious tactical tweaks required if it is bladed rather than blunt.

Of course, a change in mindset, as well as strategy, is required when dealing with sticks or similar weapons as opposed to empty-hand attacks. The 5th Dan Doce Pares master has his own theories on the topic: "As we all see in boxing, kickboxing and the likes of MMA, even the very best

fighters are unable to stop all the hits that come their way — but we know that it will take a number of hits or a lucky punch to take them off their feet. So, with an empty-handed attack, you can have a mindset that a punch, kick or any other physical attack will hurt and as long as you do something (get out of range) or condition your body to accept a number of hits, you should be able to defend yourself and disengage from the attack, and hopefully you have not been hurt too badly during the process. But when it comes to dealing with any weapon attack, you only have one opportunity to deal with it.

"Defending against weapon attacks — stick, bat, blade or improvised weapon — requires the highest level of defensive skills, and the mindset that there is a high risk that you will get hit, cut and/or worse," Toussaint continues. "People need to be realistic and realise that this is not the movies, and unlike the hero of the movie



As the attacker brings his blade over and steps into a backhand stab, Toussaint circles left (outside)...



...and turns to strike the knife-arm with his stick, keeping it vertical to cover all possible angles of entry.



...and finds the wrist, folding his hand over the top of his opponent's to grip the thumb pad.



Wrenching the attacker's arm up and back, Toussaint kicks out his foe's near leg and tilts him backward...



3

As he follows through with his stick, Toussaint contacts the knife-arm with his outer forearm (for safety)...

In-Site
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6

...bringing the attacker to the floor. Maintaining a hold on the knife-hand and blocking the arm with his knee...



7

...Toussaint can then deliver a series of finishing strikes to his downed opponent.

EMPTY HAND VS STICK



1
As the attacker swings, Toussaint moves forward to the inside (right), checking the arm with his palm...



...then immediately brings his free hand through to catch or cover as he cocks his fist back...



...to deliver a counter-strike to his opponent's exposed ribs. Maintaining control on the attacker's arm...



...Toussaint follows through with his strike and whips his hand back around to palm-strike the head.



Still controlling his foe's hand, Toussaint then brings his elbow over to use as a lever...



... then turns to scoop his arm under and twist his foe's elbow upward to pressure the shoulder...



...allowing Toussaint to strip the attacker's stick out, to be either discarded or used in defence.



Dropping the stick, Toussaint brings his left hand over the attacker's shoulder to meet his right hand...



...and clamps his forearm in under the attacker's jaw line, against the carotid artery, to bring him under control.



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TECHNIQUE

who can take multiple strikes, slashes or stabs and still survive, in reality, weapons maim and kill. So develop the mindset to be able to stay calm and in control of yourself, and have the skill set to deal with fast-moving attacks from weapons. Understand that you must do something before the weapon gets to hit or cuts you."

As with many combat systems concerned with conditioning mind and body in complementary fashion, Filipino martial arts have turned to sport as a means of pressure-testing their weaponry skills and wits. Although stick-sparring — with plenty of protective gear and sometimes padded sticks — makes up only a small part of the total system, it is now an international full-contact sport with world championships every two years, run by the World Eskrima Kali Arnis Federation (WEKAF). "Full-contact stick-fighting sounds like you're just going at it with the other person, but it's more than that," says Toussaint, who has much experience trading blows from which to draw. "The aim of these tournaments is to earn points for any successful strikes that hit the opponent's helmet or body, while defending yourself from the strikes of your opponent or trying to disarm the weapon from the other competitor. The competitors wear large helmets with a metal face shield, and padding to their body, arms and hands. Some of the best fighters can hit their target up to six times per second — at this speed your fitness must be up there with the best, like kickboxing or MMA."

Among the seniors in the art, sometimes the training can be even tougher. Dean Carter, a Doce Pares instructor from Bunbury, Western Australia, learnt this when training with Toussaint in Cebu, Philippines. "While training for our Black-belt certification in Cebu, the group of us drove to Badian Cebu, the Doce Pares waterfront

retreat," Carter recalls. "There the participants of the congress had a feast, followed by training on the beach. It was there I did 'semi-controlled' sparring with then-4th Dan Marc Toussaint.... While playing around and doing some controlled sparring, Marc accidentally buried a stick in the side of my head. I saw him take a quick look, and, noting there was no blood, he said, 'You gotta move your head, mate!' He's not the type to kiss it and make it better!"

It can be brutal and bruising, but rest assured, says Toussaint, when it comes to competition, the rules and protective gear keep competitors safe.

STICKING TO REALITY

While sticks may have originally been introduced as a safe substitute for the 'real thing' — that being a blade or sword-like weapon — in training, stick-fighting skills are nevertheless very applicable to self-defence, especially if facing a belligerent with a blade.

"The fact that we specifically train with a weapon as our primary means of attack and defence allows us to train for realistic attacks, whether [the offenders] are armed with a knife or not. Doce Pares eskrima teaches you to understand how a realistic attack can be delivered; we train to deal with the frenzied attack, which is more realistic than a single attack with a knife as taught but other martial arts systems," says Toussaint. "The further advantage developed through training in Doce Pares eskrima is the ability and skill to be able to move with good body angling and footwork to cut off the attack, and make more room to control the next attack that may come from the attacker. And, redirect it to where you are waiting for it, thus controlling the attack successfully and putting yourself in a better position to be able to defend yourself."

Although carrying eskrima sticks around with you is not



legal in Australia, Toussaint is quick to assure the potential eskrimadors out there that there is no shortage of modern, improvised (and thus legal) tools or weapons to which eskrima skills can be transferred for self-defence.

"Dealing with street self-defence, facing an attack with or without a weapon, from one person or two or more, you can pick up anything that could be used to help defend that attack; for example, a rolled-up mag or newspaper, or a water bottle, as well as a walking stick... anything that you can hold in your hand could be used to defend yourself," says the stick-fighter, "remembering, however, that you only have to do what is needed to stop the attack, and save yourself or family and friends — any more than that...well, you have overstepped the line. The skills learned are to be able to control the attacker or attackers without having to go to extremes." ■

ROLLED MAGAZINE VS STICK



1



As the strike comes in, Toussaint turns inside its arc and blocks with a strike to the attacker's inside forearm...

...then continues forward to strike the face, switching hands to keep the attacker's weapon-hand covered.



2



3

Toussaint then continues moving in as he traps his foe's arms and thrusts his improvised weapon into the upper ribs.

PEN VS STICK



1

Toussaint enters as the strike is launched, covering and stabbing his pen into the attacker's forearm...



2

...then moves up to latch onto the arm with his covering hand as he strikes to the eye or temple...



3

...following through in a circular motion to come back with a stunning strike to the neck. ■



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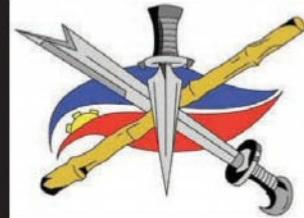
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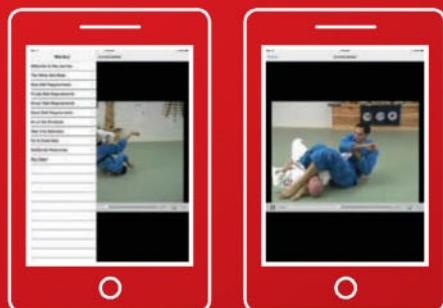


A guide to the
best martial
arts apps

"Hack away at the unessential," Bruce Lee famously advised in regards to bettering oneself — and as martial artists embrace the digital age, pinpointing the 'unessentials' becomes an increasingly difficult task. With thousands of martial arts mobile phone and tablet applications now available, it's hard to tell whether you're getting quality or just another run-of-the-mill McDojo download. So what are your best options? Here, Blitz takes a look at some of the more useful and user-friendly martial arts apps currently on the market to help you make an informed decision before hitting the 'download' button.

STORY BY BOON MARK SOUPHANH

Try searching for the top martial arts apps on the App Store or Google Play and you're going to be in for a rough time. Regardless of which style you search for, you're going to encounter dozens of different apps — some good, some great, and some downright dreadful. To make things easier, we've singled out some of the most popular martial arts and tested them ourselves. Hopefully, with our help, you can find the app that's best for your needs.



MMA TIMER LITE/PRO BY SKH APPS

Type: Training aid
Price: Free-\$1.29/iOS devices

MMA Timer represents a simple app, executed perfectly. Arguably the best professional app timer for martial arts training currently available, it allows you to connect your device to a dock or speakers to create a loud end-of-round bell or siren. The timer can be used for other sports and circuit training — not just martial arts and combat sports.

With timers a staple of just about any martial arts or fitness gym, the app can be used in place of a professional gym timer, many of which cost well over \$100. MMA Timer Pro is fully customisable with four one-touch presets — Amateur (3x3 minutes), Pro (3x5), Champion (5x5)

and World Champion (3x10). Add a rest duration timer and warning alert and you've got yourself a pretty complete timing app.

We found that the iPad was the better device to use with the app as it can easily be seen from across the room.



LEARN WING CHUN BY VTWORKZ

Type: Instructional
Price: Free/Android devices

While the general feel and appearance of Learn Wing Chun may come off as a little daggy, the app definitely makes up for its lack of sleekness by giving the user both quality and quantity.

The app is unique in that it includes instruction from sifus of four different schools: Izzo Tactical Combat Martial Arts, Master Wong Academy, Windy City Wing Chun and Wing Tsun Kung Fu Sweden — a great way to get a taste of different approaches to the art.

While all the schools include great

breakdowns of techniques as part of their tabs in the app, we found the Master Wong approach the most useful. With all the techniques broken down into 50 different structured lessons, Master Wong guides you through everything from basic leg exercises to advanced punch and kick combinations. Master Wong's instructing style is infectious and animated, and he delves into the techniques in great detail.

If you're looking for a quality Wing Chun app — especially if you're a beginner — Learn Wing Chun should be at the top of your list. Being that it is completely free is a huge bonus!

ROY DEAN ACADEMY (RDA) BJJ BY ROY DEAN ACADEMY

Type: Instructional
Price: Free-\$31.99/iOS & Android devices

The task of sifting through the hundreds of available Brazilian jiu-jitsu apps was a daunting one, as practitioners of the *arte suave* have arguably embraced the digital age more fully than have many of their traditional martial art counterparts.

Renowned Black-belt Roy Dean's RDA BJJ is a great place to start if you're looking for clear, concise instruction as well as insight into BJJ philosophy. After

enjoying a solid competitive career, Dean forged a reputation as one of the art's best instructors following the release of his *Belt Requirements* DVD series.

The app's interface is easy to navigate and follows essentially the same teaching principles as his DVD instructionals. Including techniques aimed at practitioners of all belt levels, Dean's calm demeanor and the articulate explanations of his techniques and philosophies make this app one of best BJJ apps on the market, without a doubt.



WTF TAEKWONDO TV BY DARTFISH.TV

Type: Video library
Price: Free/iOS & Android devices

In a nutshell, the WTF Taekwondo TV app gives you access to all videos on the official taekwondo TV channel of the World Taekwondo Federation (WTF) — that's over 8000 bouts from over 30 top-rated international tournaments including the World/Continental Qualification Tournament for the 2012 London Olympic Games, World Championships, European Championships, World Junior Championships, and a number of different international Taekwondo Opens.

If you enjoy watching competitive taekwondo, the app is hands down the most comprehensive fight library available on mobile or tablet. The interface is neat and easy to navigate, allowing you to find specific matches easily. However, our favourite feature of the app has got to be the inclusion of data indexing in the videos. This saves you from searching through entire bouts to find key moments such as scoring moves, warnings and highlights — a real time-saver if you're only keen on sifting through fights rather than watching the entire thing.

New competitions are added every month, so you don't need to worry about exhausting the library or missing more recent bouts. This app is a no-brainer for anyone into their taekwondo — whether you're a competitor, coach or enthusiast, you can always benefit from seeing the world's best go at it.

MARTIAL ARTS GYM BRAND APPS BY PULSETEC SOLUTIONS

Type: Business
Price: Free/iOS & Android devices

As the business sector embraces the digital age, there's no reason why martial arts school owners can't cash in on the benefits. This is where a quality app for your school can assist dramatically in increasing referrals as well as engaging existing members.

"All the research is highlighting that people are increasingly using mobile devices to interact with businesses and to search for the information they want," says Neil Earey from PulseTec.

"Traditional websites are not keeping pace with customer expectations nor offering the user experience they expect. This is where the use of apps is becoming the deferred and defacto method of engaging with businesses."

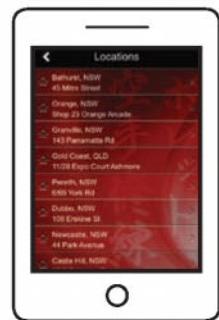
A GymBrand app lets you market your gym in a new way, differentiating your school from your competition. The app gives you the ability to engage members with push notifications — alerts sent out in a similar way to text messages to the user who has downloaded the app. This gives all users instant notice of special deals or important updates such as changes to the training schedules, events and news.

While your school may already have social media sites, integrating them into your smartphone app can be easily done to make

accessing the social media pages even easier — simply with one touch on the screen. Merchandise and products from your school can also be sold with the in-app shop tab. The feature allows you to take payments via Paypal or cash, connect to a receipt printer and specify delivery and pick-up options. You can even set options such as size, colour and add-on sales. Very cool!

PulseTec will design your GymBrand app in consultation with you, using your school's colours, fonts, images and overall look and feel. Once your app is available for free download, you can update your app's content or appearance whenever you like using the powerful content management system (CMS).

For more information regarding GymBrand, visit www.gymbrand.com.au



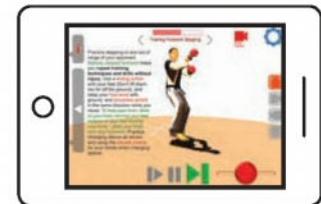
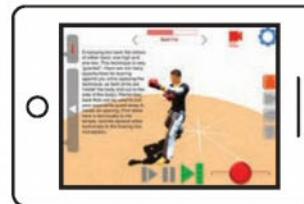
KARATE EDGE SPARRING BY MOTION EDGE ACADEMY PTY LTD

Type: Instructional
Price: Free/iOS devices

Designed to train fundamental and advanced techniques, Karate Edge Sparring is an intuitive teaching aid aimed at the karate competitor. Based around the use of 3D motion capture visualisation, users will be guided through all kinds of karate techniques with the help of a neat 3D model.

I know what you're thinking — can a 3D model accurately replicate the same movements as a human being? After dabbling with Karate Edge, I would have to say the answer is 'yes'. In many ways, using the 3D model is in fact more convenient to use than watching a traditional video instructional. This is achieved via the app's handy rewind and fast-forward function, which allows you to replay, freeze frame, slow down or speed up the techniques as many times as you like.

Another feature that sets the app apart from a standard video instructional is the ability to rotate the 3D model a full 360 degrees — you can also tilt the camera view 45 degrees upward. A helpful compass



feature also works to accurately tell where the model's centreline is.

The insight into the techniques extends deeper than simply the 3D model, with each technique accompanied by a detailed explanation. Accessed via the 'i' button, Karate Edge breaks down the mechanics as well as the subtle details, whether it's a basic footwork drill or a jumping front-kick.

Instructional apps often include a decent range of techniques but suffer from a lack of intuitiveness. The guys at Motion Edge Academy have definitely nailed it by developing a quality karate app with in-depth instruction combined with detailed and intuitive user controls. Suitable for beginners up to advanced practitioners, Karate Edge is without a doubt one of the handiest training aids for mobile phone and tablet users.

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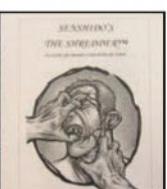


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DVD \$64.95 RRP



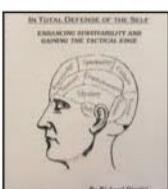
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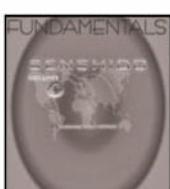
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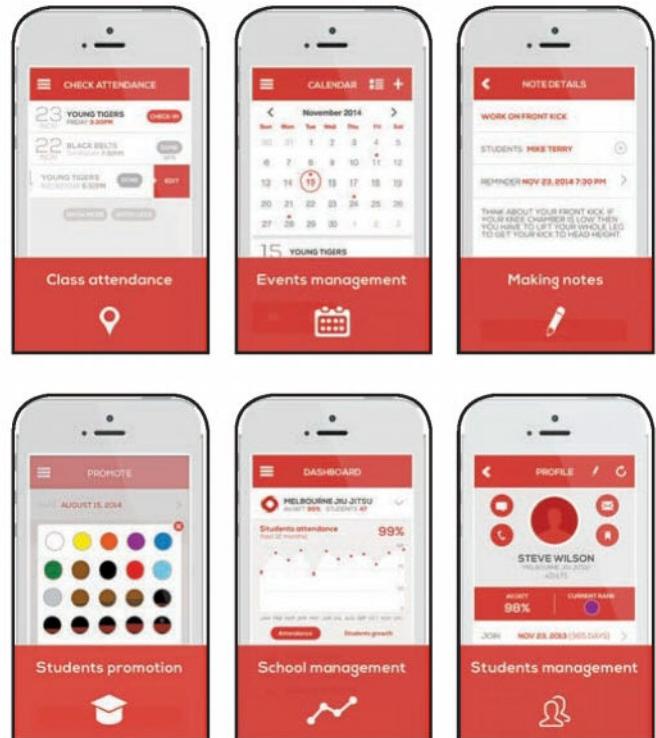
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NEXTBELT BY ROMAN ZAYTSEV

Type: Business/Management
Price: \$4.99/iOS & Android devices

Nextbelt is an app designed with the martial arts school owner in mind. The majority of school owners are yet to fully embrace powerful tools like mobile gadgets and applications, and this is where Nextbelt comes in — it aims to reduce the time you spend managing the business and give you more time to coach your students.

Based around a simple user-friendly interface, Nextbelt gives the user the ability to track and monitor various aspects of their school, from student attendance to finances. Findings are shown via logical data and club statistics making it easy to see where your business needs to improve — definitely one of best aspects of the app. There's a lot of software out there with a hefty price tag and membership fees, however, at \$4.99, Nextbelt could be considered a steal.

Another neat feature lets student check in to classes

with a click of a button. This gives graphical data on the student attendance levels, which can help in planning gradings and other events. Students' ranks and progress can be logged and a complete rankings breakdown of all your students can be viewed in an easy-to-read table.

The event management features are also pleasantly easy to use. The app is essentially a class and event planner that is easily tweaked. All events and changes to class times can immediately be sent out to students via a push-notification function.

"Our app makes you a more humble and critical person and more self-reflective of the decisions you make for your school and students," says creator Roman Zaytsev.

Considering the detail of the data and the ease of use of the app, school owners in need of a tool to help improve the way they run their business should seriously consider Nextbelt. ■

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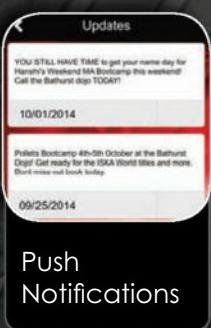
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FIGHT LIFE WITH CAIN BRUNTON



Taking the Thai Road

Victoria doesn't have a reputation as a hotbed of Thai boxing culture; rather, it is traditionally held as the stomping ground of kickboxing. Cain 'Insane' Brunton is working to change that, one fight at a time. He talks about his recent WMC State Title win and the possibilities it has opened up for him, including a spot on JWP's Caged Muay Thai, a promotion as Queensland-crazy as anyone could hope to get.

INTERVIEW BY JARROD BOYLE | PHOTOS BY WILLIAM LUU & TERRY VORG



Cain, how did you get started in kickboxing?

My brother, AJ Brunton, he was always into fighting. He was into boxing, but then found a passion for Thai boxing. We would train in his little shed on our nights off (when we weren't training with Chris Bradford) five years ago. I would often finish school or sometimes skip school just so I could go hit the bag.

When I was about 10 years old, AJ would get his mates

around and they would watch him beat me up and knock me down. They thought it was funny 'cause I would always get up and go harder.

Have you fought under kickboxing rules in addition to fighting under Thai?

No, I've always fought full Thai rules.

Have you been cut before?

Yes, I've had two stitches in my right cheek and also four stitches in my head from [being cut with] elbows.

Who are the fighters you most admire?

Dane 'Daddy Kool' and Soren [Mongkontong]. I've met them a few times — great people and awesome fighters. Very technical — on another level.

Have you fought in Queensland?

I haven't fought in Queensland yet but in December, if all goes to plan, I'll be fighting on 'John' Wayne Parr's show, CMT.

CMT sounds hardcore. How do you intend on preparing for that?

I love a good challenge and I'll be training hard as always. I'll have to adjust my guard a little bit with the small gloves. I can already tell the adrenaline will be pumping!

What's Chris Bradford like as a trainer?

Me and Chris have been together before he even thought about starting his own gym. He's like a father figure

Brunton trades with Tommy Murray at Rebellion 6



Brunton with trainer Chris Bradford



to me; he's a great trainer and knows a lot about Thai boxing and fighting in general.

Who do you do your sparring with?

I've been doing a lot of sparring with Steve Moxon of late, who hits very hard. Also Pat Richards, Chris Bradford, my brother AJ and also Max Thomason. Max is one to watch out for in the future.

Tell us about Steve Moxon. What's he like? How have you found training with him?

Steve Moxon is very down-to-earth; he's become a good mate. He knows his stuff about fighting. I often work with him doing boxing, working on angles. He's a very good asset [to have] down at TopTier.

Had you played any sports beforehand?

I've always played sport, ranging from cricket, footy, basketball, soccer, to karate. I'd always been a pretty active kid, but once I found Thai boxing, that's all I did.

What do your parents think about fighting?

My parents are extremely supportive of my fighting — they are always at my fights.

Who is your trainer?

Michael Archer is my pad holder and good friend. "Always behind the Insanity," he says. Chris Bradford is also my pad holder and supportive of my training.

Have you trained or fought in Thailand?

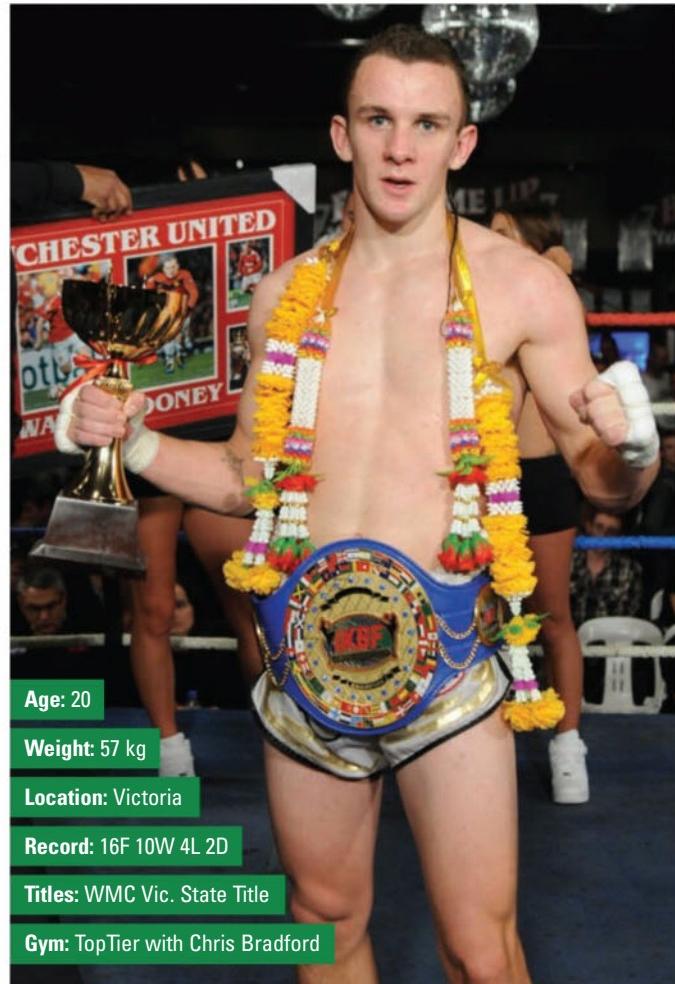
I recently just got back from Thailand, training twice a day at Sinbi Muay Thai in Rawai, Phuket. I had one fight; winning by TKO via leg kicks in the second round. I plan to go back at the start of next year and stay for around three to six months, just for training and fighting.

Where do you want your kickboxing career to take you?

I wanna be the best I can be. The plan is to travel the world and fight the best.

What are your memories of your first fight?

I'd just turned 18; I was fighting on Joe Demicoli's show at the Westend Market Hotel in 2011. The adrenaline was pumping, everyone was watching, all I wanted to do was go out there and win. I wore my brother's shorts from



Age: 20

Weight: 57 kg

Location: Victoria

Record: 16F 10W 4L 2D

Titles: WMC Vic. State Title

Gym: TopTier with Chris Bradford

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FIGHT LIFE WITH CAIN BRUNTON

Brunton on his way to winning his first fight in Thailand



"I like to think about it as more a lifestyle and enjoying being fit. Having such a good crew at TopTier Muay Thai in Geelong makes it easy to keep walking in that door with a smile."

Thailand for good luck. I fought Phivo Christodoulou for three rounds. The fight was awarded a draw. My shins got a bit of a shock, actually. Then I found he was probably even worse!

Toughest opponent to date?

Michael Gelsi. We fought twice and both times agreed that when we fight, it hurts!

Do you have a 'day job' to supplement your income?

I'm a plumber. As my trainer Archie likes to say, 'on the tools', which I think makes a difference, having [to do] a hard labouring job all day.

Sixteen fights is a lot of fights in two years. How do you manage to fight so often? How is your body holding up?

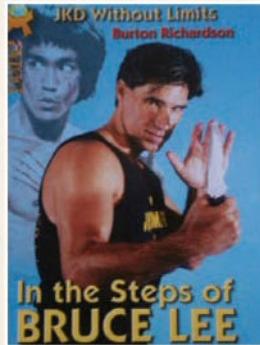
I like to think about it as more a lifestyle and enjoying being fit. Having such a good crew at TopTier Muay Thai

in Geelong makes it easy to keep walking in that door with a smile. I love the sport and the culture. My body is fine; I like to swim down at the beach early in the morning after training for recovery. I'm trying to stay as active as I can, fighting at a young age.

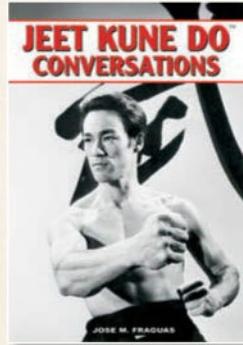
How was the experience of fighting for a WMC State Title?

I fought Tom Murray. He'd been the top 55–57 kg fighter for a long time in Victoria. I remember seeing him fight before I even started fighting. When I got the call to fight such a good fighter, I was more than honoured to fight him. He wanted to take my head off in the first couple of rounds! With the experience of my last few fights, I held my composure and kept kicking high. I got the win after five hard rounds. It was a very exhausting fight. ■

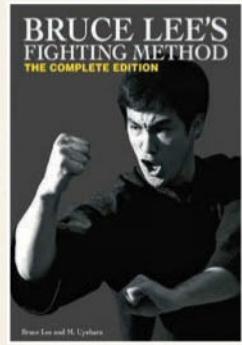
FIGHT IT LIKE THE DRAGON!



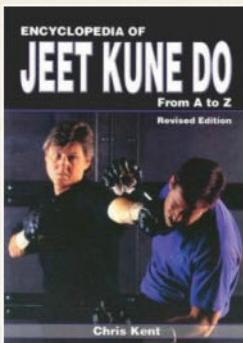
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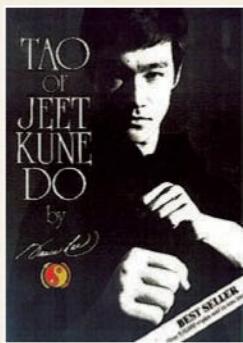
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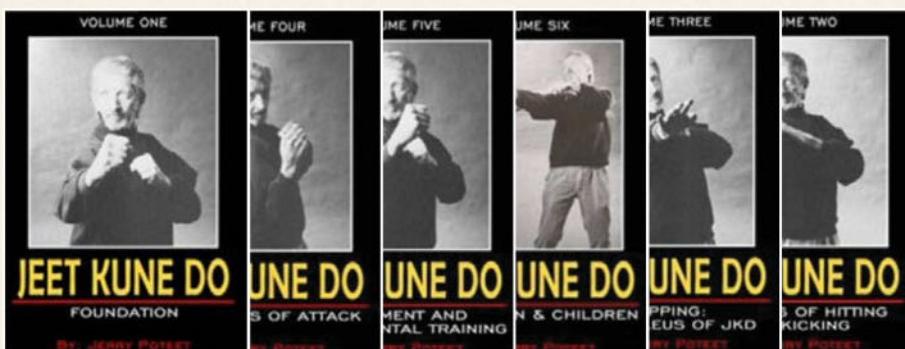
**ENCYCLOPEDIA
OF JEET KUNE DO:
FROM A TO Z**



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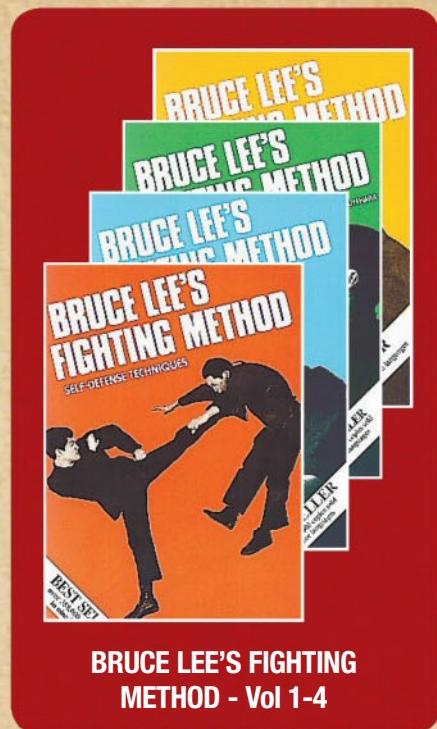
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Cage Fights Coming to Vic?

While the Aussie MMA scene is buzzing with the news that the cage ban in Victoria could be lifted, some of the country's finest continue to prove the depth of our local talent overseas.

Being a native Victorian, I have written about this many times in the past. And it's sad that after all these years I am still writing about it. I am, of course, talking about the **Victorian cage ban**.

However, for the first time there is a genuine, and strong, possibility that the ban may be lifted very soon (despite every mainstream media outlet in the country trotting out the most bloody fight footage they can find in covering the issue, as usual).

The Shadow Minister for Sport and Recreation, Mr John Eren, has publicly stated on several occasions over the past six months that if Labor were to come into power at the 2014 election, he would immediately seek to lift the ban on caged arenas.

With the Victorian elections set to happen shortly after this edition hits the stands, and with Labor looking like the hot

favourite, it could be very good news for fighters and fight fans, no matter which side of the political fence you usually sit.

Make no mistake; this decision will have a huge impact not only on MMA in Victoria, but the entire country.

So, here's to a stadium title fight Down Under in 2015!

Victorian heavyweight kickboxer Andre Meunier was given an amazing opportunity recently, travelling to Japan for a spot on the K-Legend card on 19 October alongside some of

the biggest names in the sport, including Ernesto Hoost, Peter Aerts and Sakmongkol.

Meunier's opponent was a fighter well known to Japanese kickboxing fans — German K-1 stalwart Chalid 'Die Faust' Arrab — but Meunier made it clear before the fight that he was not intimidated.

"He's good; he's fought everyone. I've watched him twice, and that's enough. I tend to fight my game, not focus on them. I look at their strengths a bit, but they might have changed their style since

then. I'll go in my way, suss out the first round, and if it doesn't work, then I'll try and bash him."

And bash him the Aussie did, walking away with a third-round KO win and his biggest scalp to date.

Adopted Aussie UFC fighter Hector Lombard

withdrew from the UFC Fight Night 55 card in Sydney, but will take on MMA journeyman Josh Burkman at UFC 182 in his return fight on 3 January 2015.

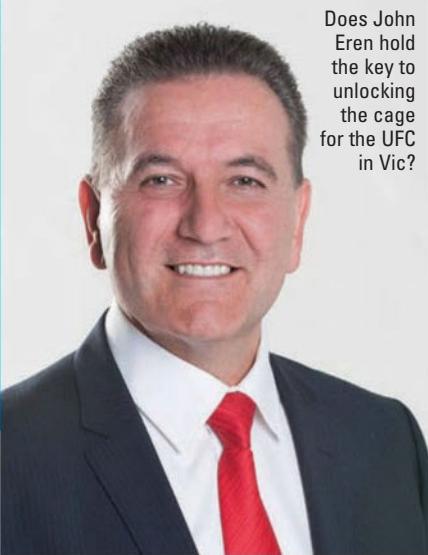
UFC president Dana White announced the fight via his

Meunier makes a mess of Josh Heta's mug in a recent Melbourne fight



Does John Eren hold the key to unlocking the cage for the UFC in Vic?

WILLIAM LUO



FIGHT NEWS WITH JARRAH LOH

Twitter page, ruling Lombard out of the Sydney card on 8 November. The Cuban-born Aussie was disappointed to miss out on an opportunity to fight in front of his 'home crowd', after proposed fights against Tyron Woodley, Gegard Mousasi and Matt Brown all fell through.

His opponent, Burkman, has accrued an impressive 9–2 record (including a win over ex-UFC contender Jon Fitch) since being cut by the UFC six years ago off the back of consecutive losses to Mike

Swick, Dustin Hazelett and Pete Sell.

Eyeing a title shot, Lombard may already be looking ahead of the bout with Burkman, calling out one of stars of the division shortly after the announcement.

"Rory [MacDonald], after I'm done with Burkman — fight me for the number one contender [spot]," said Lombard via Twitter.

MacDonald emphatically defeated Tarec Saffiedine recently with a brutal third-round TKO.

Nitro 12: Ben Nguyen lands one on Reece McLaren



Chris Morris defends a front-kick from eventual winner Luke Morris at Nitro 12



Polish promotion Konfrontacja Sztuk Walki (KSW) held an event on 4 October with a main event featuring

Aussie heavyweight legend

Peter Graham, who made a successful debut when his opponent, Polish kickboxer Marcin Rozalski, was forced to submit due to a knee injury.

Graham came out in the second with a nice one-two before both fighters exchanged some heavy shots against the cage. Graham caught the leg of Rozalski and took the fight to the ground, but as he attempted to pass, Rozalski injured his knee and quickly tapped.

The end came 43 seconds into round two and, with the win at KSW 28, Graham moves his pro MMA record to 10–7.

Aussie fighter Robert Lisita

walked away with a loss when he was submitted by Russian fighter Marat Gafurov in the main event of One FC 21 on 17 October in Malaysia.

The fight was over within 70 seconds after Lisita tapped to a rear-naked choke.

After an impressive win streak against the likes of Rodolfo Marques, Takeshi Inoue

and Yusuke Kawanago, Lisita has now lost two straight fights.

Isaac Tisdell was already owner of the fastest finish in Nitro history after he knocked out Harley Taylor back at Nitro MMA 8 in just nine seconds. And according to fightnewsaustralia.com, he was able to improve that with an eight-second finish of **Gokhan Turkyilmaz** at Nitro 12 to capture the lightweight title.

Meanwhile, **Ben Nguyen** reclaimed his Nitro bantamweight title by split decision, and **Luke Morris** edged out a win over Chris Morris also with a split decision.

The event took place at the Logan Entertainment Centre in Logan City, Queensland on 11 October, with the full results as follows:

Main Card:

- Isaac Tisdell defeated Gokhan Turkyilmaz via KO (spinning back-fist), round 1, 0:08
- Ben Nguyen defeated Reece McLaren via decision (split)
- Luke Morris defeated Chris Morris via decision (split)
- Alex MacDonald defeated Brentin Mumford via decision (unanimous)
- Ryan Heketa defeated Joep Beerepoot via verbal submission (heel-hook), round 1, 3:53

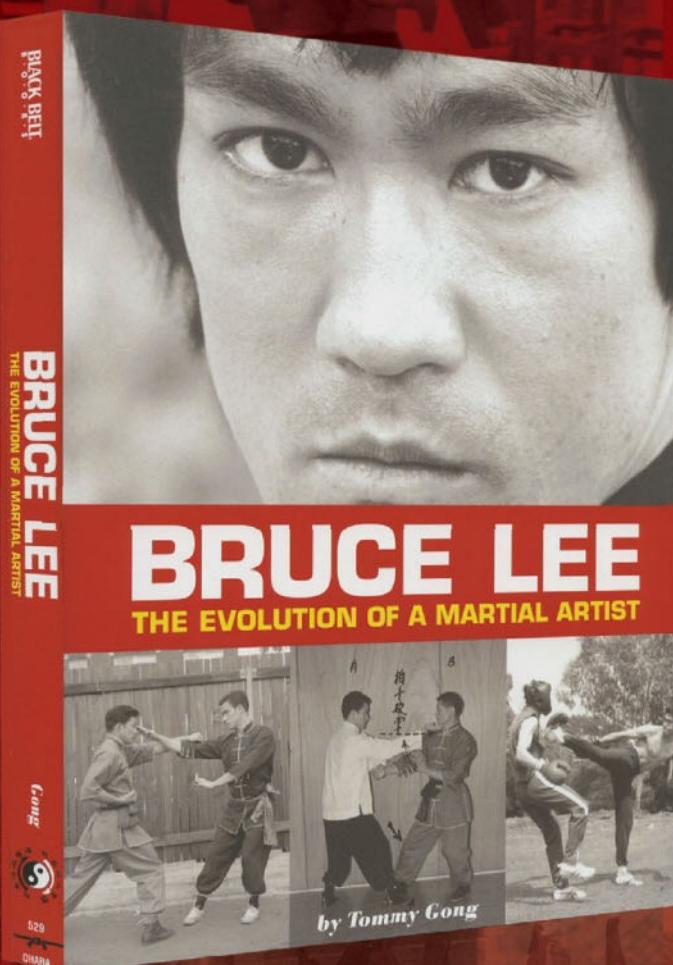
Undercard:

- Megan Anderson defeated Jodie Struzik via submission (rear-naked choke), round 2, 0:30
- Luke Wright defeated Saeid Fatahi via KO, round 1, 3:42
- Mick De-La-Warr defeated Richard Tuala via TKO (punches), round 2, 4:18
- Maui Tuigamala defeated Shane Mitchell via submission (rear-naked choke), round 1, 3:52
- Edwin Arana defeated Ashkan Mokhtarian via submission (rear-naked choke), round 2, 3:33
- Marcus Galloway defeated Blake Russo via decision (unanimous) ■

GG

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THE ARNOLD MARTIAL ARTS FESTIVAL WITH MARTIN HALL



Kicking for the Stars

Renowned taekwondo instructor Martin Hall, 8th Dan — coach of Australia's only Olympic gold medallist, Lauren Burns — and his wife and co-chief instructor at Hall's Taekwondo, Jeanette Hall, will bring the Korean martial art to the mats at the first ever Arnold Martial Arts Festival in March 2015. Martin Hall gave *Blitz* an insight into what we can expect.

Martin, can you please tell us about your role at the Arnold Martial Arts Festival 2015, and who else will be on your team organising the taekwondo event?

Jeanette will work side by side with me organising the event and we will be supported by our strong team of instructors and staff from our five full-time centres. Over the past 30 years, Jeanette is well qualified in business administration and marketing and I am more hands-on with the operational side. We will also have qualified referees through STA [Sports Taekwondo Australia] maintaining world-class court standards and control.

For those readers unfamiliar with your form of combat sport and/or this event, could you please give a brief summary of the rules and competition format?

Sparring competitors will wear electronic chest guards and score one point by punching to the body, one point for a scoring kick to the body, two points for an effective turning kick to the body, three points for a kick to the headguard and four points for a scoring turning kick to the headguard. It is full contact and knockouts do occur. Competitors will fight two or three rounds of one-to-two minutes depending on age and belt level.

Poomsae (patterns) competitions will display the very technical side of TKD. Competitive poomsae has advanced in appeal in recent years and spectators will be impressed by the standard.

Are these rules different at all to the last Olympics, or since the recent merger of STA and TA [Taekwondo Australia] — Australian taekwondo's governing bodies under the World Takewondo Federation?

Competition rules are World Taekwondo Federation and both STA and TA use the same system. Because of the Olympics, taekwondo is highly regulated and very attractive to athletes and spectators. Taekwondo is fast, dynamic and highly skilled.

What can spectators expect to see when they check out your art at the festival?

Intense battles between competitors of all ages and all abilities, and awesome technical demonstrations.

What does being part of the Arnold Martial Arts Festival mean to you — why have you chosen to be involved?

It's a great opportunity to unite both STA and TA in a friendship competition for our customers to see how we

can enjoy a well-run, fair and on-time competition. Most importantly, we admire Arnold Schwarzenegger's drive and determination to encourage the wider community to get involved in fitness and reap the benefits of health and wellbeing. He has expanded the Arnold Classic to include Australia and martial arts, and we want taekwondo to be well showcased on this platform.

What advice would you have for those who are perhaps training in taekwondo but unsure of whether to compete or not?

This competition is open to all levels, including novice competitors, and is a perfect starting place for all to experience. It will be a friendly competition with lots of added benefits to highlight your experience: you will have access to all three days of the festival, and enjoy other sports and displays through the competition arena and the expo. There will be many like-minded people to meet. Gain confidence through participation!

Your daughter, celebrity personal trainer Tiffiny Hall, is arguably Aussie taekwondo's most famous face these days, and she has also been a top competitor in poomsae for many years. Will Tiffiny be involved with the Arnold?

At this time Tiffiny is busy setting up her commitments for 2015. She is keen to be involved at an organisational level and support us as much as she can. ■

The Masters' Tip

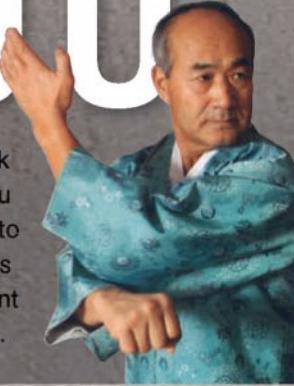
Martin Hall on how to handle competition day:
Self-talk has to be monitored, true and self-assured. Prepare yourself well, ask questions so you can be well informed, and be well supported on the day through your club and coach.



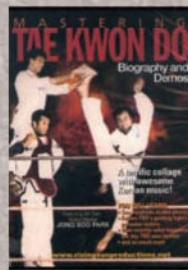
Aussie taekwondo world champ Carmen Marton in action

M A S T E R I N G TAE KWON DO

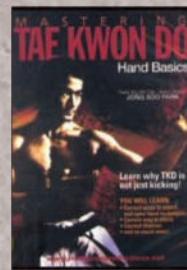
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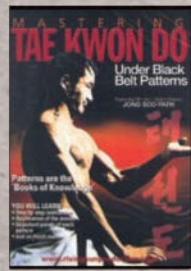
BIOGRAPHY AND
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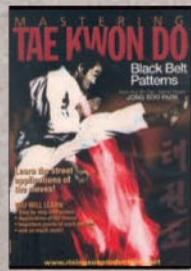
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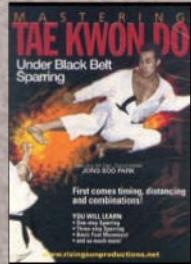
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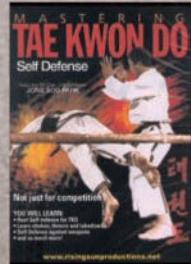
BLACK BELT
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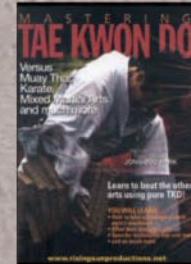
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COMING UP

IN FUTURE ISSUES OF BLITZ



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We investigate the Australian Institute of Sport's ground-breaking judo program and why it brought the Japanese team Down Under

Up, Up and...Elbow!

A look at the upward elbow technique and its many combat applications: strikes, locks, breaks and blocks

Conversations with Kata

An insight into the meaning of kata and how to get the most practical use out of this traditional karate training tool

Hit It!

Evaluate the many different striking apparatus made for martial arts training and their uses in different styles

Stick-fighter for Life

The story of female full-contact stick-fighting champion Andrea Wheatley and her journey in one of the toughest combat sports around

Power Internal, Part Two

Chinese-born Master Yang Hai offers more rich insights into the workings of tai chi, bagua and Xing Yi kung fu

Ready to Rumble?

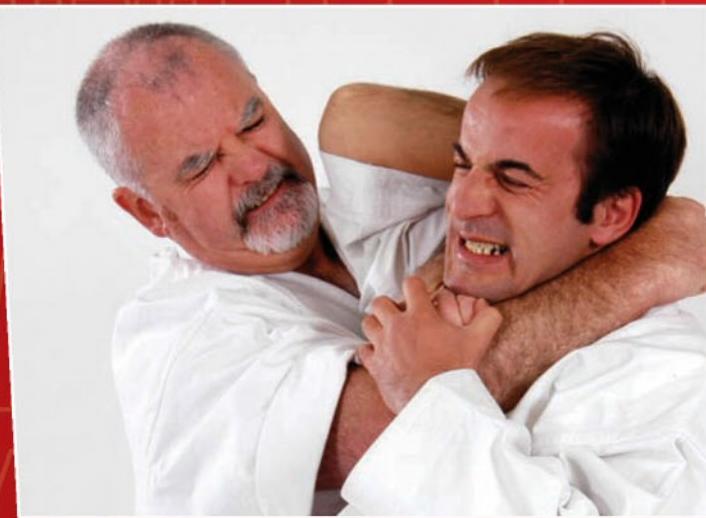
Leading combat athletes, sports psychologists and coaches give crucial tips for tournament preparation

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Your Punching Protégés

Last issue we looked at how new 'one-punch laws' affect students of self-defence — but what of their implications for martial arts instructors?

As martial art instructors, the core of what we do is teaching students how to punch, kick, elbow, throw, etc. So where does our duty of care lie?

Take, for example, a student who goes on a night out with friends, has a few drinks as he/she is not driving and gets to a point where, if tested, they would have a blood alcohol level of around 0.15 ('high' range, if driving). This reading could result from as few as six standard drinks for a 70-kg person — the results vary for males and females, and are also dependent upon how quickly you drink and your body weight. So, your student gets into an altercation and defends themselves using a technique that you taught them. As a result, the other person is seriously injured or dies.

Your student can, of course, claim self-defence. It should be noted that so far only one person has been charged under the new 'one punch' laws in NSW. He is currently facing a

mandatory minimum sentence of eight years up to a maximum of 25 years in prison. This man is currently being held without bail and will likely remain in custody until the trial, meaning he could spend anywhere between six months to a year in prison before he has the chance to claim self-defence in court.

As martial art instructors, can we be held responsible for the actions of our students?

That question is yet to be answered, but let's consider what might happen if our student claims — in court, in the media or to the police — any of the following:

1 The reason they used the technique that caused the damage was because their instructor/s told them to do so if attacked.

2 Their instructor/s only taught a 'crash, bash and destroy' response if attacked, and that was all they knew how to do.

3 Their instructor never mentioned 'reasonable force' or the legal consequences of using self-defence techniques.

Students need skills in pre-fight negotiation as well as punching...but few teach the former, many the latter



4 Their instructor never mentioned stepping away and avoiding the confrontation.

Or, what if our student decides to sue us for negligence on the grounds mentioned above, because they are facing the prospect of a long prison term and the huge cost of a criminal trial?

What if the injured person's family sues us because the person who injured or killed their family member may not have been able to do so without our training and guidance, or, alternatively, because we advocated a 'bash and destroy' method of self-defence?

These are only hypothetical questions, but if a martial art student is charged with such an offence, there will likely be lawyers willing to test these questions in court.

It is also worth considering if your martial art instructor's insurance would cover your legal fees to defend this sort of lawsuit. I doubt it. So, unless you as an instructor want to run the risk of being sued for a vast sum of money, I recommend the following:

1 Educate your students about self-defence and the law, the use of reasonable force and what to do and say to police if they are unfortunate enough to get into this situation. (If you don't have that knowledge or expertise, contact me for help.)

2 Make public statements that detail your school or

clubs' position on self-defence and the law, and the use of reasonable force. The best way to do this is on your website, social media or blog.

3 Be careful what you post online to social media, such as Facebook and YouTube, as this material can be used in evidence. Two or three violent YouTube clips could be far more persuasive than your denials.

4 Ensure your social media presence is balanced, as if this sort of incident occurs, the media will use your online material and to muckrake and sensationalise if it allows them to.

5 Promote the positive aspects of your school and style so you can rightfully claim that self-defence is part of what you do and that you don't promote the brutal destruction of anyone who has an issue with you (you don't, do you?).

Unfortunately, we live in an age where many people look to blame someone else for their misfortunes or bad judgment, and if you look at the number of companies being sued in regard to workplace issues, it's no stretch to imagine a martial art instructor being sued.

***Disclaimer:** This is general information only; it does not replace advice from a qualified solicitor. Should you require legal advice, seek it from a suitably qualified and experienced legal practitioner in your state or territory.*

Phil O'Brien teaches reality-based self-defence in Western Sydney and has been studying the physical and psychological elements of self-defence for 25 years. A former NSW police officer, O'Brien is now a solicitor with Sydney firm Teddington Legal. He can be contacted via www.teddingtonlegal.com.au



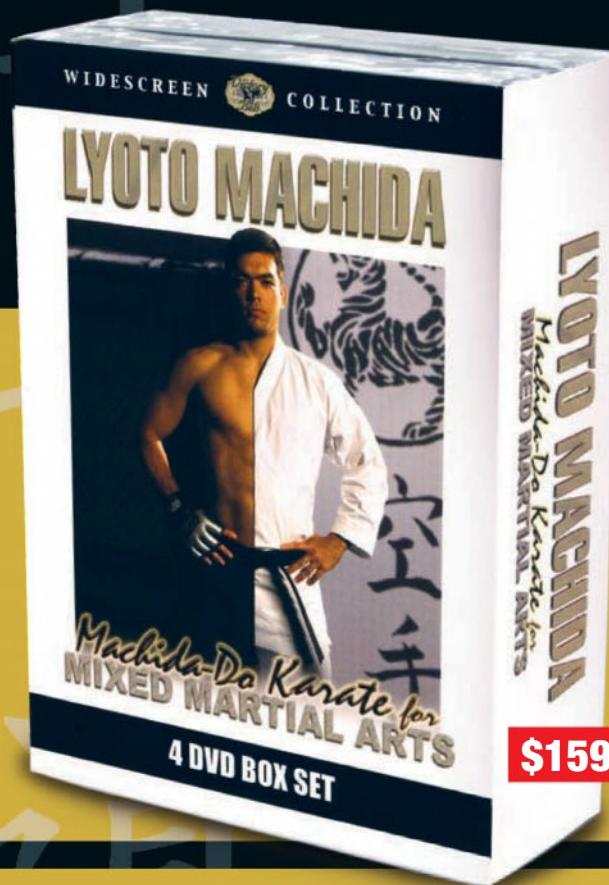
GEORGES ST-PIERRE: THE WAY OF THE FIGHT

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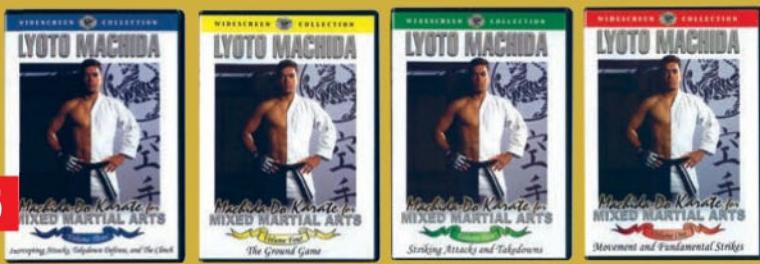


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GET TACTICAL WITH GRAHAM KUERSCHNER



Changing Gears

Looking at even a small range of people's personal experiences with violence shows that understanding context is everything, and a broad skill base is required to adapt.

It was a strange week. It started with a call from a middle-aged woman who seemed hesitant and clearly knew little about our industry and the systems that comprise it. I was struggling to form a picture of what I was working with when she disclosed that her next-door neighbour has made a serious threat against her. Then it made sense: she is not into 'the physical thing' but was clearly worried and has no idea how to deal with the potential violence that resides next door. I had to drop into counsellor mode — despite never having qualified as one — and talk her through her concerns.

Later, I had a mother worried about her son being bullied at school, followed by a

father who was worried about his daughter, but she was only 14 and 'a bit young'. I talked them through their options. Later, a complete switch with a call confirming I would be attending a charity fundraiser along with other groups of traditional martial artists to teach some 'techniques' from a modern defensive tactics system. I began to think: what am I going to teach these guys that will make sense and be of some value?

That was followed a day later by one of my students in the security industry giving me his after-contact briefing on his experience. He had to deal with a guy so drunk he had trouble standing. As he was talking to him, he noticed two individuals off to his right who

seemed to be concentrating on the proceedings. His gut told him they were connected with the drunk guy and if this went physical it would be a three-on-one, not a one-on-one. He was part of a group that had arrived in a bus, which was travelling from bar to bar on a 'pub crawl'.

He went to a plan B and told the guy that the bus operators had a strict policy of not allowing anyone on the bus if they were drunk. Of course, he knew that was rubbish. He suggested that the inebriated fellow go outside to get some air and sober up, gently guided him out while keeping the drunk between him and his friends so as to keep them all in line of sight. This was stuff we had practised in the gym: tactical positioning 101.

My student could tell the guy smoked and so suggested he might also want to have a quick smoke, as he couldn't smoke on the bus. As he got near the door, he faked a smile for the benefit of his friends to make it seem all was okay. They stayed put. It all worked.

My student wanted me to offer a critique of his handiwork and whether it followed our approach, particularly extrication from a situation using tactical and verbal skills only, which we practise. Switch gears again.

Then yesterday, one of my students, who is a police detective, ran me through the broad detail of a drug raid in which he, an offender and several other officers ended up in a scrum that went to ground with him on the bottom. No

mats — it was rough concrete. He ran me through the event and indicated he wanted more of our brand of groundfighting and what else there was to go through. Again, switch to a completely different scenario, needs and context.

That afternoon I took a call from an army sergeant, who is ex-Special Forces, who wants me to provide training to several platoons under his charge. We talked at length about my experience in the military and training other military groups, and what would suit them from knife work, firearm retention, control and restraint or combatives, trying to figure out on the fly what his units need to complement the official army training program.

By then, I think I'd just about run out of gears to switch into. From middle-aged women, concerned parents and traditional martial artists to an experienced security guy, a drug squad officer and army platoons. How broad does your skill base have to be and how much depth do you need in each skill set in this self-defence game? It was mentally exhausting and it seemed a much easier proposition to just be teaching people how to fight in the ring, I thought. Why am I doing this?

Because there is a crying need. Because there are people out there who want help, who are scared, who want to feel better about themselves and a bit safer in this world. That's why. Get over it, princess! ■

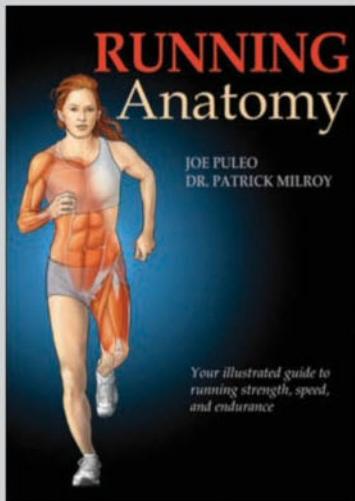
Calls for help come in many contexts



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Graham Kuerschner is a 48-year veteran of the martial arts and can be contacted through his website www.sdtactics.com.au

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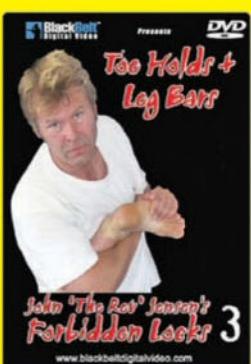
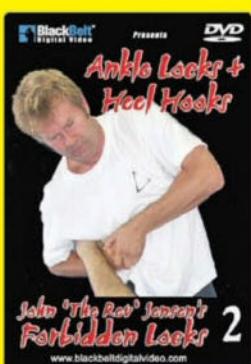
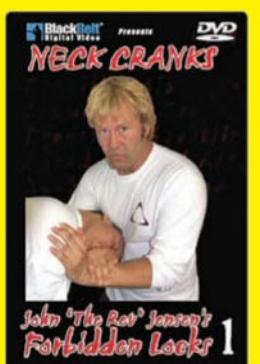
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Raise Your Weapon

When it comes to self-defence, you want to be the weapon and have the tool, not the other way around...

You have probably heard the saying 'don't bring a knife to a gun fight'; however, the reality of a gun fight at close quarters is a little more complex than that — you're actually better off bringing both.

Until recent years, Army training in close-quarters battle (room-to-room close shooting) and close-quarters fighting (combatives or unarmed combat) were seen to be two very different things and the attitudes of instructors from both camps was at times poles apart. I would often hear fellow firearms instructors say that unarmed combat was a waste of precious training time, that you just need to shoot the enemy first. My comrades teaching unarmed combat would retort with 'hands don't have stoppages' (referring to incidents when a firearm malfunctions or runs out of ammunition). This banter went on for decades, with firearms training usually coming out on top (as it should). It was only as Australia entered into its longest war in history that the two camps began to understand how much they actually needed each other.

With my background as an instructor in both fields and with several commanding officers seeing the need to link these skills, the Australian commandos began to move down the integrated combat path. The dire need for integrated combat capability became apparent through my personal experience and, more importantly, the immense experience of my fellow commandos — during the 'war on terror', the 2nd Commando



There are many legal personal items that may be useful as an 'equaliser'

Regiment has been involved in the most fighting, had the most men killed and wounded in action, and has been the most decorated unit in the Australian Army.

Of course, when we're in a gun fight, we just want to shoot the enemy; however, the enemy has his own thoughts on the matter and would rather not be shot while he tries to shoot you. And if a weapon is going to malfunction, it will tend to do so at the worst possible time, when you pull the trigger. So, by integrating close shooting skills (using both our primary and secondary weapons) with close fighting skills using auxiliary weapons like the knife or improvised weapons such as a gun magazine or tactical helmet, we are able to produce a mindset in commandos that it is in fact them who are the weapons, and that everything they use is just a tool that will enhance their already honed warrior skills.

How does this thinking compare to that of the average martial artist, who may think weapons are only necessary

for those whose work involves dealing with an armed enemy or potentially armed criminals? Well, personally I think that many martial arts schools use the term 'self-defence' merely as a throwaway line for their marketing brochures. This is particularly true of those that don't address weapons — not of the ancient kind, but the kind easily available today — both in defending against them and applying those that are legal (i.e. improvised). The fact is, the very nature of violence tends to be as it is because the people involved are armed or use improvised weapons found at the scene. Two guys having a fight in a pub can be seen as violent, depending on the perception of the observer; but what if one of them has an accomplice who steps in to glass the other person and then joins in with his mate kicking

their fallen adversary in the head while he is unconscious? To any observer, this would be seen as violent in the extreme.

In Australia, you have the right to self-defence, you just don't have the right to seriously prepare yourself for dealing with violence — because violence very often means weapons. Practising a bunch of techniques with plastic guns is not a bad idea, but it's limited in its effectiveness unless the actual working gun is used. If you're not exposed to live shooting with a firearm, then you won't understand the stress and weaknesses of that weapon, nor all the real opportunities in dealing with somebody who has that weapon. If you want to defend yourself against violence, you must expose yourself to the weapons that can be found within your environment and you must also be realistic and adapt your training to suit the environment you're in or are planning to enter.

The worst thing you can do is to believe that your tree house will stand against the coming tornado; if you're dealing with the threat of tornados, start working on a bomb shelter off to the side of your tree.

So, what's that in your pocket (bag, car, desk drawer...)? Could it be a tool for dealing with violence? If so, train with it and get familiar with it, because these days that's what you need. ■

Sgt (retired) Paul Cale has fought in Afghanistan and until mid-2013 managed the Integrated Combat Centre at 2nd Commando Regiment, where Cale was in charge of developing CQC for Australian Special Forces. He now leads the combat sports program at the Australian Institute of Sport and runs Cale Integrated Combat (www.facebook.com/caleintegratedcombat)



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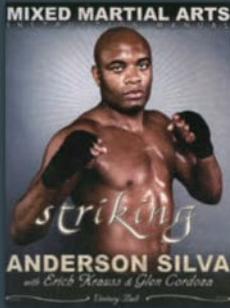
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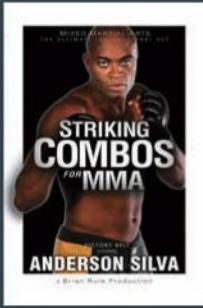
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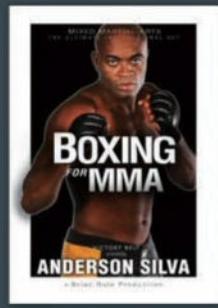
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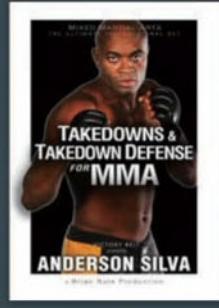
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A Fork in the Road

Some pioneers of Brazilian jiu-jitsu lament the growth of sport BJJ and see it as a potential agent of destruction to the art's tested self-defence methods. Will it be so?

There is an idea rolling around the BJJ landscape that we have reached a fork in the road; a landmark that we may look back upon from the future as a 'tipping point' of sorts.

The idea is that, as with all forks in the road, we need to choose, each according to their own needs, our way forward. One pathway leads to the further development of the art that is optimal for a sporting application; the other focuses on self-defence applications and, dare I say it, life skills.

Let's consider the first pathway. The sporting/competitive face of BJJ is an extremely important and very rewarding one. On that particular landscape, BJJ athletes pit themselves and their increasingly more specific 'games' against one another for

medals, money and prestige. As with all sporting events, the evolution of the art (in that environment) is driven by those technical developments that give rise to victory. If a strategy or technique (tactic) affords a point (or even advantage-based) victory, then it survives and prospers; counters are then developed; counters to counters, and so it goes. This is the birthing place for technical development; it's where new ideas germinate and new 'branches' of the art sprout and develop.

Well, to be more accurate, the competitive landscape is where new technical developments are pressure-tested; however — and this is the point of departure for those who choose the alternate path — they are pressure-tested only for effectiveness in that

particular environment: the sporting arena. A 'deep half-guard' game or a 'worm guard' game may not be the best choice for 'real-world' conflict — in fact, far from it! Such techniques and game strategies may frustrate or defeat a fellow competitor; but that is where their effectiveness ends. For self-defence applications, they are largely irrelevant or, more to the point, redundant.

Please don't misinterpret my meaning. Most high-level BJJ competitors, in a one-on-one, real-life, grappling-based confrontation, will emerge victorious. But they will not do so by employing these highly specific and intricately evolved gaming strategies — they will more than likely use simple techniques and solid basics.

So, one way to look at the competition-biased BJJ game is that it has been developed to deal with ever more evolved and experienced BJJ players. In other words, you are learning to play chess in a way that will allow you to compete with high-level chess players. You don't need to know such strategies to deal with people who have never played the game (but you had better also be aware that they won't play by rules, either).

The other pathway offers an art that unfolds in a very different way. Many of the techniques and strategies are the same but the focus is just very different. That focus is placed on solid fundamentals; a deeper understanding of

those aspects of BJJ that are of more use for self-defence applications that are likely to arise in the real world. While there are a seemingly endless variety of techniques and strategies on offer, the focus is about 'drilling down' and increasing understanding of those more subtle — even invisible, you could say — principles and strategies that make those techniques work. And in this drilling down, we learn. Not only more about the technique, but more about ourselves. We can also learn to make connections between the principles at play on the mat and those by which we can operate and run our very lives.

Perhaps some people do feel the need to make a choice; after all, for most of us there is limited time we can allocate to training. By taking one path, we can move further along it and do better than if we spend equal time on both.

I believe, though, that we can, with a reasonable approach, extract value from both pathways. Rather than seeing them as two paths that head away from each other in opposite directions, like a T-intersection, we can view them like the double helix spirals, as often used to illustrate a DNA strand. The two pathways twist around each other and connect at many, many different points. By walking the twisting pathway, we might extract the benefits of each approach. And there is certainly a lot on offer. ■

Perhaps some people do feel the need to make a choice; after all, for most of us there is limited time we can allocate to training.

When it comes to martial arts, can we follow parallel paths at the same time?



ISTOCK

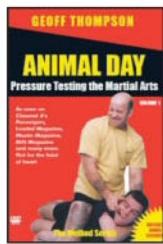
John B Will is head of BJJ Australia and teaches Brazilian jiu-jitsu, shootfighting and self-defence solutions around the world. Check out his regular blog at www.bjj-australia.blogspot.com.au

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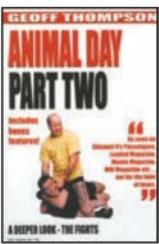
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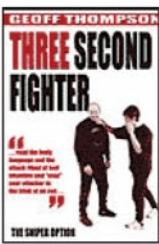
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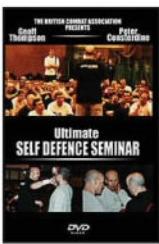
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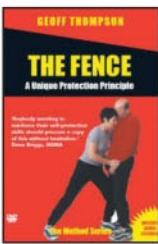
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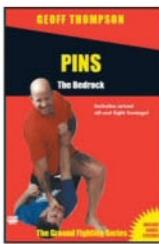
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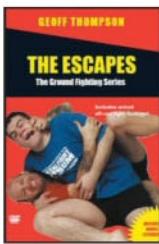
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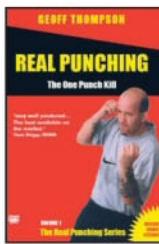
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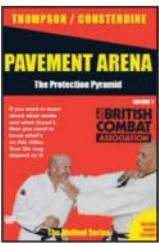
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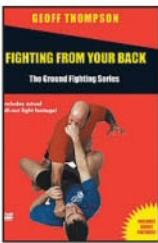
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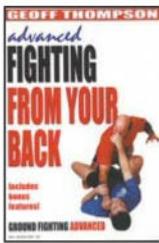
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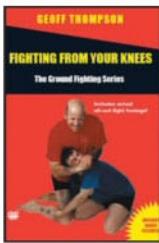
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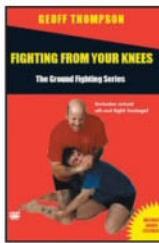
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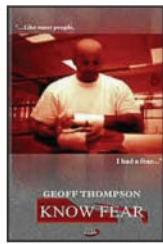
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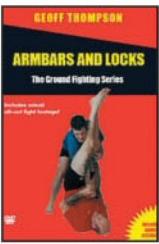
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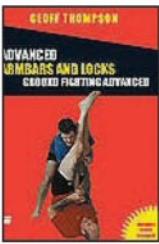
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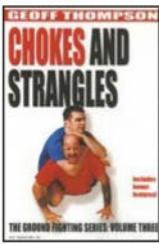
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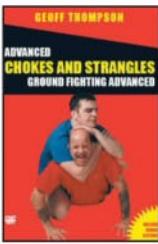
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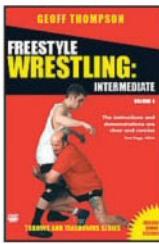
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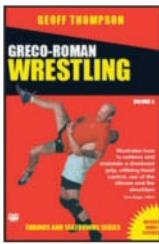
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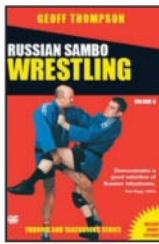
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